

LONDON THE READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION

[IS RESERVED.]

No. 636.—VOL. XXV.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 10, 1875.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[FLORAL SPOILS.]

THYRA DESMOND;

OR,
THE MAIDEN OF THE LAKE.

CHAPTER I.

Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.

Did my heart love till now; forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till to-night.

Shakespeare.

"Then you really have the charity to permit me to await my friend O'Byrne's return, my dear madam?" said a young and distinguished-looking man, who was at the moment standing near the window of the drawing-room, in the Rectory of Ballyglass, with eyes that seemed irresistibly drawn to the romantic prospect it commanded, albeit his attention was given ostensibly to his hostess, the mistress of the little domain.

Mrs. O'Byrne was, in truth, quite attractive enough to have engrossed her guest's thoughts and homage, in spite of the thirty or more years—a period that had certainly passed very lightly over her bright nature and piquante features. She had the wonderful Irish eyes, the rich, clear Irish complexion, and, above all, the laughing gaiety of expression that defies the power of time to destroy.

And Brian Vescei was perfectly capable of appreciating the winning charms possessed by the hitherto unknown wife of his old school friend, to whose rectory he was now paying a passing visit en route to the metropolis.

Was it then the beautiful picturesque grounds that sloped down to the noble Lough Corrib which so attracted his gaze? Was it the sheeny sunlight on its waters, or the fairy boats which floated with their miniature sails, that seemed only fit to be managed by Titania and her court?

Mrs. O'Byrne was perhaps enlightened on the

subject by the sudden passing of a light figure across the bay windows, one of which opened like a door of the house, and the subsequent entrance of the new comer who had occasioned that momentary shade.

"See, Nora, dear, can you really forgive my gourmandise des fleurs?" exclaimed a sweet girlish voice, with the faintest possible touch of brogue to give it an additional charm. "But look at the beauty of my spoils," pursued the new comer, too engrossed with her floral burden to perceive the presence of the stranger guest.

"Well, Thyra, you are, I know, an incorrigible little reiver where flowers are in question," replied Mrs. O'Byrne, laughing, "so it is of no use to scold you, even were we alone. At any rate, I will defer my lecture to be given in private, and introduce to you instead a new guest—an old friend of Maurice's. Mr. Vescei, let me present you to our friend and neighbour, Miss Desmond."

Certainly Thyra Desmond looked more like the flower queen, the Goddess Flora, in Brian's eyes than a mere country-bred damsel, and a lovelier vision seldom, perhaps, could dazzle a young and impressionable man's heart and brain.

Thyra did not look more than eighteen, if, indeed, she had counted so many summers. Her figure was light and round, graceful as youth, free exercise and natural symmetry could make it, and her face more than completed the charm. The lovely dark gray eyes, with long lashes, had a violet tint in some peculiar lights; the hair looked like chestnut that had caught and imprisoned sunbeams in its meshes. The skin resembled painted velvet in its soft grain and delicate bloom, and her lips were simply beyond description, because the mobile mouth could express either scorn, or love, or joy, or pensive thought, according to the mood of the spirit within the fair form.

In truth, Thyra Desmond was about the loveliest specimen of the fascinating Irish girls who play such sad havoc with the hearts and wills of their captive admirers.

And though Brian Vescei had run the gauntlet of many bright faces and arch smiles, he decided that he had never known what beauty was till now.

It by no means took the time which the portrait has consumed to convey this information to his mind.

Still, though Thyra did in her surprise drop some flowers on the carpet, the young man was too experienced to betray any such feeling to either the young colleen or her friend. He hastily sprang forward to pick up the blossoms for the fair robber, and only ventured to detain one of the choice myrtle blossoms which were, indeed, the most modest portions of the lovely but ephemeral children of nature which Thyra had collected.

"May I keep it as a gage, not wage of my lucky service?" he asked, gaily, of the blushing girl, whose brightened bloom might be owing to pride as well as shyness.

"I must ask Mrs. O'Byrne," replied Thyra, naively. "I have no right to give her flowers away, even if I am so daring as to steal them. Nora, dear," she added, turning to her friend, "I must go now. I have already lingered too long, and papa will be waiting luncheon unconsciously for me. Will you come with me on the lake to-morrow? I will be here in the boat any time you like to fix."

Mrs. O'Byrne laughed hesitatingly.

"You are almost too venturesome for me, mavourneen," she said, playfully. "However, if the day be as calm as this I think I can screw up my courage sufficiently to trust your oarsmanship. Suppose you come as soon as you can after breakfast, and tell Mr. Desmond not to expect you till you return. I suppose it is of no use to ask him to join us at dinner?"

A sad look shaded for a few brief seconds the girl's bright face.

"No! oh, no! At least, I fear not. I will tell him if you wish, Nora, and I know he would come to you if it were possible for him to go out anywhere. But he is not equal just now to exertion."

"Well, we will leave it to him. If you can

persuade him to come we shall be charmed. In any case, we shall rely on your staying all day, and Maurice will take care of you home at night. Addio, mia cara. Our lady keep you well."

Nora O'Byrne touched lightly the velvet cheek of her young friend, and, placing the basket of flowers on her arm, Thyra bowed coldly to the gentleman, and prepared to depart.

Brian Vesel was not, however, to be so easily baffled. He opened the door with a graceful bow, but it was also accompanied by a respectful yet very obvious extension of his hand, which Thyra Desmond could not pretend to ignore.

There was a momentary touch of her slender fingers, then, ere he could even decide as to the propriety of escorting her to the gate, she had sprung away and was bounding over the smooth lawn with gazelle-like speed.

He returned to Mrs. O'Byrne's side with a very decided desire to ingratiate himself with the friend of so bewitching a girl.

"You tell me that your husband will not be very long," he said, pleadingly, "and I am so very anxious to see an old chum whom I remember so affectionately, but I fear I must not remain much longer. The coach leaves Galway at five, and there are some four miles to walk, even trusting to the Irish computation of the distance, which I generally find to be at least half as long again. Yes I should be sadly vexed to miss O'Byrne entirely."

"Are you quite obliged to go to-night?" said Mrs. O'Byrne, with a demure smile that implied a secret amusement at her guest's diplomatic tactics. "I not we shall be very glad to keep you till to-morrow if you will put up with rustic Irish fare and accommodation."

Brian hesitated. "It is too presuming," he said, "a perfect raid on your hospitality. I really fear to risk the grave looks of your husband at such cool intrusion on his fireside and Penates."

"Oh, Maurice is a great deal too clamorous to look coldly on an old friend," she returned, laughing. "And I am far too good a wife to trench on his prerogative unless I was sure of his approval, and you can stay the matter is soon settled."

Mr. Vesel was not too happy, and in less than half an hour from his arrival his valise was placed in a latticed bed-room overlooking the lake, and furnished in the most perfect taste, as an apartment in a paragon of a moderately beneficed Irish incumbent, but blessed with a dear and womanly wife, accomplished in all feminine arts of decorative embellishment. Brian was accustomed to splendid, spacious chambers in his ancestral home and in the houses where he was a petted and honoured guest; but he thought he had never seen so charmingly attractive an apartment as this maple-furnished bedroom, with all its snowy hangings, its brilliant trifles worked by Nora's skilful fingers, its cabinet pictures and bookshelves that were also the production of her own and her husband's industry and taste.

Then the view with its emerald green, its dazzling flowers, its calm lake, and above all the glimpse of a white villa amidst the trees on the opposite bank, which he fancied might be Thyra's home, was lovely enough to cover a multitude of deficiencies in his surroundings, had such existed.

So Brian blessed the stars that had cast his lot so propitiously, and secretly hoped his friend might be as hospitably inclined as the pretty, piquante wife.

He descended at the sound of the bell, which summoned him to the mid-day meal or luncheon, after a brief but refreshing toilet, and to his mingled relief and alarm encountered the grave though kindly features of the clergyman, who had been his friend and protector at school in his boyish days.

Mr. O'Byrne was some few years the senior of Brian and had stood his champion in many of the trials and oppressions that are inseparable from public-school life, and though Brian was the only son and heir of a wealthy baronet, and Maurice the portly nephew of a bachelor uncle who had undertaken the expenses of his education, yet the friendship had become as strong and true as benefits conferred and warm gratitude in return could kindle in two honest and kindly though most diverse natures.

But it was some ten years since they had met, and Brian only realized the changes that such a period can work when he saw the worn look of his friend and the hair, in which there were some premature white streaks already varying the dark, rich brown.

A few words, however, soon removed all restraint and embarrassment from the younger man's mind.

"This is truly kind, Vesel," exclaimed Mr. O'Byrne, extending his hand for a grasp as warm as in their Harrow days. "I hardly thought you in your gay life, would remember a quiet Irish parson, and take the trouble to come round to see him in his seclusion."

"And I came in some trepidation lest you should think me an impertinent fellow, and show me the door," returned the young man, joyously. "But Mrs. O'Byrne kindly pledged herself for my gracious reception."

"Ah, Nora always knows what will give me pleasure and as invariably endeavours to accomplish it," returned O'Byrne, with a fond glance at his bright little wife.

"But we are showing scant hospitality in keeping Mr. Vesel in starvation, Maurice," put in the lady, gaily; "and there is some freshly caught salmon that will be cold unless we make more speed for its discussion."

The hint was acted upon, and the trio were quickly arranged at the dining-table, that, with the rest of the menage, displayed all the elegance of domestic cleanliness in the linen and the bright silver and glass that adorned its service.

Brian had never relished trout so completely or thought it possible that potatoes could possess such a tempting flavour as on that occasion, albeit excitement and appetite were somewhat at war while he endeavoured to do justice to the repast.

"Maurice, Thyra has been over here this morning," said Mrs. O'Byrne, when the meal was nearly over, and some of the most spontaneously expressed of the recollections of old times had been exchanged between the friends.

"Indeed! and could you not persuade her to remain?" said the rector, calmly emptying his glass, with what Brian thought extraordinary indifference to the news.

"Not but she will be over to-morrow morning in the heat for a row. I think you, Mr. Vesel, had better accompany us; it will be decidedly better for my peace of mind if you do," returned Mrs. O'Byrne, smilingly.

Perhaps her greater husband doubted whether it would be as conducive to the peaceful composition of his guest to be thus thrown with the beautiful overwoman, but he gave a half-assent, reserving perhaps the right of reconsidering the Bill in consequence hereafter.

"Well, on attended the call of to-morrow, we will take a stroll this afternoon, Vesel, if you are inclined," he said, carefully changing the subject. "Of course you will not leave us," he went on, "all you have explored our neighbourhood; it is worth a few days' study, I assure you. We shall be charmed to have your company, if you can amuse yourself in our modest way. It quite renews my youth and makes me fit enough for cricket and football to hear your voice and look at you, as little changed as you are. Certainly in your case the boy was father to the man."

"In feeling he was undoubtedly," returned the young man, eagerly. "I am just as compliant to your orders as ever, O'Byrne, and if you really mean me to remain I am a willing prisoner on parole."

"Agreed; so now I will just write a letter, and then we will start," said Maurice, cheerily.

He was as good as his word, and the friends started off at a brisk pace along the shores of the beautiful lake, the rector supplying all topographical details of the country as they went onward.

"And who lives in that white house so charmingly nestling in the wood?" asked Brian, after some indifferent questions that skilfully led up to the leading point he desired to know.

"That is the residence of Mr. Desmond, the father of the young lady of whom we were speaking just now. Did you see her?" said Mr. O'Byrne, with a furtive look at his companion.

"Yes, for a few moments," was the reply. "She is very pretty, is she not?" continued the rector.

"Yes, very, I think," returned Brian, inwardly wondering how any one could call such an angel pretty; as well call the lake a nice bit of water.

"Ah, it is a great pity there is such a strange mystery over her father's history," observed Mr. O'Byrne, determinately continuing the subject.

"You heard Mrs. O'Byrne say that he would not come to us on any account. The fact is, he is as complete a recluse as if he were a hermit, and it is very rare he leaves his own house and grounds."

"Indeed! That must be very dull for the young lady," remarked Brian, with affected and careful indifference.

"No doubt, but that might be endured, and in the course of time pass away," replied Maurice, firmly.

"But the more serious part of the business is that Mr. Desmond seems to me to have some very ominous shadow on his life. He is an extremely reserved man, and even I, as the clergyman of the parish, and with a wife who is his daughter's most intimate friend, can form no idea whatever as to his connexions and his early life."

"Sure, he has but a limited income, for their house-

hold is on the most modest and reduced scale, and yet he bears the stamp and the habits of a man accustomed to a far different station. I am often perplexed at the anomaly, and mostly on Thyra's account. It must so surely affect her future life."

"I suppose so; but really there are dozens of eccentric recluses in the world, my good friend," said Brian, rather impatiently, "and it may be nothing but a fancy on the part of your parishioner. Perhaps he has had some severe trial, the loss of his wife for instance."

The rector smiled gravely.

"That is indeed a sore sorrow where the love is strong and true, as I can fully conceive," he returned, "but it would scarcely influence the whole life of a man of sense and feeling like Mr. Desmond. He came here, I am told, some sixteen years ago, with his daughter, then a tiny creature not even able to speak plainly, and who therefore has no memory of anything save her present home and habits. My predecessor, I understand, tried in vain to become acquainted with the then tenant of the Rock Cottage. Mr. Desmond was, I fancy, even more morose and asocial than now, and positively declined his rector's advances, though he regularly appeared at church on Sunday with his little girl."

"On my arrival here an accident made my wife acquainted with Thyra Desmond, and as she had a decided gift of getting her own way and softening even such a hermit nature as Mr. Desmond's, the casual introduction led to an intimacy between the ladies, which was at the first tolerated, and by degrees even encouraged, by the father of pretty Thyra. But though Nora sometimes lunches or takes afternoon tea at the Cottage, and I am received politely when I like to call there, yet the old fellow will never break bread at the rectory, and we are just as much in ignorance of the truth as we were years ago."

Brian had listened most attentively. "And does none ever visit them? Have they no connection with the outer world?" he inquired, after a brief pause.

"None that I am aware of," replied his companion, "and I sincerely think any could exist without my being acquainted with the occurrence."

"But surely his income must be paid by some one—he must have some way of receiving his money, unless it is buried in the garden, or he visits at midnight and picks up," said Brian Vesel, half-laughingly, but seriously, as they walked on till out of sight of the Rock Cottage.

"Yes, twice a year he pays a visit to Galway to receive a sum that is paid in to the bank there, but from whence it comes or what is the amount are questions that I never concerned myself with, even had it been possible to ascertain the information."

Brian flushed consciously.

"You are right, O'Byrne," he said, ingenuously. "It degenerates into impertinent curiosity even when these mysterious romances come before one so prominently. But really a man ought to be as safe from prying eyes and ears when he lives in his own strange fashion as you in your rectory, or my father in his Hall, and we have no business with Mr. Desmond and his oddities."

Mr. O'Byrne nodded approvingly. It was the same frank candour and honourable nature that had distinguished Brian in his boyish days and endeared him to his senior and protecting companion in the rough world of Harrow School, and yet he could perceive that an occasional fit of abstraction did absorb the young guest during the remainder of the walk.

If Brian Vesel had nothing to do with Mr. Desmond it remained to be proved whether some lingering curiosity did not hover round the dwelling-place of Mr. Desmond's daughter.

CHAPTER II.

THYRA DESMOND had just steered her little boat across the smooth water of the lake, albeit her thoughts seemed far less engaged than usual by her favourite amusement. In truth the lake maiden had from early childhood been as much accustomed to boating as most girls are to horse exercise or driving, and the same excitement and pleasure were experienced by her in this sole active diversion within her reach.

But on this day she let the little skiff take its course, with not the actual necessary guidance; and Oscar, her large deer-hound, who was the inseparable guardian and attendant of her walks and sails, lay in the bottom of the boat, gazing with so much inquiring wonder as a dog's face could express at the unusual gravity of his mistress.

"It is so strange," she murmured, softly, "he must have thought it so strange that papa would not accept their invitation, and so it is, more so than I ever perceived before."

Thyra was decidedly testing the first flavour of

the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and it might be of some other hitherto unknown and even unsuspected feeling which belongs to her sex and age.

But she started back as if from their whispers and hastily sprang on shore, and hooked her little boat to the accustomed bulwark with a rapidity that had something of a most novel impatience in its display.

She bounded up the sloping lawn, on the summit of which stood the Rock Cottage, and encountered on the terrace which surrounded that green, smooth carpet the tall figure of her sole known relative, her grave, mysterious father.

Mr. Desmond was unmistakably a gentleman in every attribute, both physical and mental—so much even the instinct of the inexperienced Thyra could determine as she looked on his fine features and distinguished bearing that no lines of sorrow nor the extreme simplicity of his dress could disguise. There was something that at once riveted the attention in the noble head, the thoughtful eye, and above all in the extreme, and fixed sadness of the mouth, and by some singular fatality, it seemed to Thyra that she had never marked all those particulars so keenly as at that moment.

"Papa, have I kept you waiting? Did you think me sadly thoughtless?" she exclaimed, springing to his side as he turned to meet her.

"I am always selfish enough, I fear, to find your absence long, my dear's joy," he said, in a rich, soft voice, which could well express the tenderest emotion as well as powerful and manly command.

It had indeed a most peculiar timbre, like most of the characteristics of Eric Desmond, and one that could never be mistaken or forgotten when once heard.

"And it is selfish of me to leave you so much," she said, hanging fondly on his arm. "I promised Nora to go over to-morrow and stay all day, but I will send an excuse, and we will be so happy, and enjoy this bright sunshine together," she added, so guiltily that it concealed the truth from her keen-eyed parent.

"By no means, Thyra," he replied, firmly. "It is my wish, and in a measure my comfort, that you should spend as much time with your friend as is good for you and her; though there is such a possibility as too constant companionship," he went on, with a sigh. "But you will never be tempted to that mistake, love of my heart."

"Nora begged so hard that I would try and induce you to join us, papa," she returned. "I think you would like Mr. O'Byrne if you knew him. He is so grave and thoughtful and kind. Nora is perfectly devoted to him, though she is so different from her husband."

A slight spasm of some struggling emotion crossed Mr. Desmond's brow as his daughter spoke.

"Do you suppose that it is from surprise or gloomy moroseness that I refuse all such advances, Thyra?" he asked, almost sternly. "Do you think I am a hypochondriac who shrinks from visiting his fancied ailments in healthy atmosphere? That must be your idea of me, my child."

"No—no, a thousand times no!" exclaimed the girl, eagerly. "But all I did think was that they would allow you to be as free at the passage as at the cottage, and I cannot bear to think of you as always alone and sad, dearest father. You forgive me, Thyra, will you not?"

"My darling, there is nothing to forgive," he said, drawing her towards him as they entered the favourite apartment, which was half drawing-room, half library, where Thyra worked and drew and sang to her father, and he read, wrote and thought for hours.

"Thyra," he went on, placing himself in his usual seat, a large chair near the window which commanded a view of the wider scenery stretching away from the lake, while his daughter's especial delight was to gaze from the opposite window at the bright waters and bank. "Thyra, my child, I have hitherto perhaps forgotten that I ought no longer to treat you as a child; that I must not expect your young life to be utterly lost in mine, or that you can remain content in the cloud which has rested on me so many years that it were as strange for my mind's vision to be removed, as for a blind man to see light."

Thyra hastily buried her face in the cushions of her father's chair as he spoke.

It was remarkable how his smile re-echoed in her breast, and around there a chord of which she had hitherto been unconscious. A brief week, a day, before this, she would have gaily repudiated the idea, would have declared any such anxiety on his part as superfluous and unreasonable. What had worked the change in the lake incident?

"Dear papa, you are only too thoughtful for me. I am grateful not to spare you any such fears. I will devote myself more completely to you in future," she answered, anxiously.

"No, dear child, now it is impossible. It is all contrary to nature that I should be so," he replied. "And what is more, I have no power to alter your fate, save what the chances and changes of destiny may effect. But at any rate I will try to guard you from the worst and most hidden evils that threaten you."

"I may at least extract some of the sting from the wound, if I cannot defend you, as I would fain do, if it cost my very heart's blood," continued Eric Desmond, with a deep, intense vehemence that spoke of the unconquerable emotions that struck him to the very centre of his being.

"I am ready; I will obey all you may wish; you may test me, dear father," said Thyra, with a calm loftiness of mind that had a tinge of her father's spirit in its proud self-reliance. "You need not fear I will be unworthy of you," she added, raising her lovely eyes to his with an unfinching, thoughtful candour in their depths.

"I believe you, my own blessed child, and I would that I could tell you all that I could relieve my heart of its load and prepare you for the ordeal that may await you," he replied, fondly. "But that cannot be; I may only give you a faint shadow sketch of the sorrow that has weighed me down to the crushed, hopeless being I have become."

"It will be reverently received and guarded as a sacred trust, whatever you may see fit to confide in me, dearest father," said Thyra, in a subdued voice.

"It is but little that I can reveal," said the recluse, gently, "but I would shield you as best I may against the world's shocks. Listen to me, my child," he went on, more rapidly. "I was once gay, thoughtless, proud as any of the most favoured and haughtiest of the children of fortune. Life had but one bright, attractive vista for me from my cradle to my grave—so far as the gifts of Providence could be lavished on its path. Rank, wealth, love, were mine, either in prospect or in actual possession. I was spoiled, courted, adored, and beloved. There was no doubt or fear in my mind that any one of these proud joys could fall me save in the grave," he went on, bitterly. "And who in the zenith of youth and health thinks of so distant an event as death? Thyra, in one hour, I might almost say one moment, I was hurled from that proud eminence, and reduced to the degraded, hopeless creature that I now am—that I have been for seventeen long years."

Thyra's breast heaved tumultuously, a vague terror of she knew not what oppressed her; she could not speak, but waited in breathless suspense for the next words that should come from the lips to which she had ever listened with reverent submission from her earliest years.

They came at length.

"Yes, Thyra, the terrible blow came and stamped every power of joy or interest in my mind. I was henceforth a banished and isolated man, with but one tie to life, and that was you, my only, my idolized child," he went on in a choking voice. "Yet do you," he said, vehemently, "can you comprehend, Thyra, that my first impulse was to regret your very existence, that I should scarcely have wept over your coffin save with tears that would have been dried by the scorching fire of my brain? Since then I have clung to you as my sole comfort in life—my preserver from despair. Though once more I feel that you had better have died in your very infancy."

Thyra's cheeks were white and her eyes flashing with the alarm and resentment that the tale kindled. Her father must be an injured man, crushed and scorched by cruel, envious, false men. It never occurred to her to doubt it; never was her grief deepened by one suspicion of his truth and honour.

There was noble heroism in her tone and look as she replied to those last words.

"Yes, I understand, but you are wrong. It is well for me to live if I can comfort and be true to you when all have deserted you. If you love me, you can see that it is a high and sufficient aim for me in life, my father."

Tears sprang to his eyes, tears that had for many long years been strangers to their feverish dryness.

"You are worthy of your—but I am raving. I would say that you more than merit the utmost love and sacrifice that I can lavish on my heart's treasure," he said, in a broken voice. "Noble child! and you have never even asked one question, never demanded whether it was by sin or by misfortune that I have fallen so low; never shown one sign of woman's curiosity to know the details of the mystery."

He went on gazing at her, as if his very eyes as well as heart could devour her loveliness and lofty purity of soul.

"Why should I? It is enough that you are suffering, and that you deem it unwise to tell me the cause," she replied, calmly. "It is not for me to add to your grief by prying inquisitiveness. If you

think I ought to be informed of the secret of your life, it needs not that I should ask it."

"You are right; you can scarcely tell how wise how right," said Mr. Desmond, returning more to his accustomed manners. "But I will take precautions that you should have the means of learning the truth under certain circumstances which I hope may never occur. When I am gone, Thyra, you will find a paper sealed up in your father's desk, which contains ample directions for your guidance, and which will inform you how to ascertain the cause of this mystery of my life. But it is my earnest prayer that it may never be known to you, but that you may float gently and buoyantly along life's stream, untroubled by the heights or depths of its waves."

Thyra listened musingly. "I scarcely know that I should desire such monotony," she said, thoughtfully. "I feel as if it were better to struggle and conquer than to live without interest or excitement to high and lofty aims. Surely you could not submit to that, father—you would not lose the memories which were bright and elevating and happy, even if by so doing you could forget the pains."

Mrs. Desmond shuddered.

"It is perhaps a stream cold as that of Lethe," he returned; "and to youth like you it is unbearable; but it is well that we cannot force nor can we out our own destiny, nor that of those we love, or we should shrink back with helpless terror from the sight and task. But enough of that," he continued, "all that I have designed to accomplish was to vindicate my eccentric habits in your eyes, my child, to ward off any heart burnings and painful pleadings on your part. It is sufficient that I cannot and will not mix again with my kind in the degradation to which I have sunk. For you, my darling, it were hard to deprive you of all the natural sympathies of your age, and your tastes," he went on, with a glance of melancholy pride at his lonely daughter. "Yet it would break my heart ten thousand times over, were you to meet disappointments and mortifications, where you expect pleasure and homage and affection."

Thyra raised her head proudly.

"Do not fear for me, dearest father," she said, in an assured tone. "I am prepared to endure what is before me, whatever it may be. You have borne years of silent, unshared suffering. Do you think I am so much more cowardly that I should shrink under the first breath of adversity? Never!"

And the young head was thrown back so that her father could perceive, as it were, each line of her beautiful face and detect no weakness or fear in one feature it contained.

"Bless you, my daughter," he said, laying his hand solemnly on her bright tresses, "such is the only comfort I can receive, far greater than tears or caresses or womanish sympathy. I can trust you and be proud that one gift is left to me of the treasures I lost. Now let the subject drop. I do not desire even to touch on the unhealed wound again. Let it once more be buried between us as it has been for these long years."

It was hard, perhaps, to impose such a test—hard to pour out such a wretched, vague tale of love and, it may be, sin and then demand silence from one who could have no relief, no confidant save in himself.

But if Thyra felt the injustice it was but for a moment and the murmur was crushed back as if it were a crime.

The luncheon was concluded in unusual silence certainly, nor were the simple viands more than tasted by either father or daughter.

But when the meal was over Thyra went to the small cottage piano that had been one of Mr. Desmond's few extravagances since his residence at Long Corrib, and her clear, sweet voice warbled some of his favourite Irish melodies.

As tastefully she sang as if no burden had fallen on her young heart. Perhaps she rather shunned any necessity for conversation during the remainder of that memorable day and took refuge in music and books.

But it was the only weakness she betrayed and her smile was bright and her caresses fond as ever when she bade her father good night and retired to her pretty apartment, fresh and pure in its fittings as her own nature.

"She is an angel," muttered Desmond, between his teeth as she closed the door behind her, "and yet she has but a life of wretchedness and disappointment before her. Where is Heaven's justice on the author of such wrongs?" and his head sank moodily on his breast and he remained long in half unconscious and motionless thought.

"Papa, shall I go? Please decide which will make you most happy," said Thyra, as she rose from

the breakfast-table on the following morning. It was the sole reference, the sole proof she gave in look or word that she even remembered the conversation of the previous day.

Mr. Desmond comprehended the full value of such reticence.

"Go," was all he said. "I wish it. It will be best for both."

And Thyra did not utter another word as she turned from the room to prepare for her little expedition, which to her had all the charms of a rare and exciting pleasure.

Yet she scarcely would have owned even to herself the cause of her unusual care and deliberation in performing her simple toilette.

She certainly did not boast of much variety or costly material in her limited wardrobe, but her instinctive good taste had supplied the deficiencies of wealth.

Her white Marsella dress was exquisitely fitted to her figure and the blue ribbons that entwined it matched perfectly with her white chip hat and its floating feather.

Some beautiful bog-oak ornaments completed her attire and as she stepped in her little boat and waved a gay farewell to her father as he stood on the terrace above a lovelier, brighter creature could scarcely have been found in Erin's Isle.

The morning's sunshine seemed to have banished some of the gloom of the previous night from her buoyant spirit, but she could not dismiss the weight of that vague half confidence from her spirits.

She could not forget that a mystery influenced her future life and might crush and destroy its whole happiness and peace.

But her buoyant nature turned from darkness to light resolutely as a drooping flower, and it almost seemed sacrilege to indulge gloom and terror in the midst of the loveliness showered on nature by nature's God.

And ere she reached the opposite landing-place the usual brightness of her smiles had returned without effort or constraint.

"Well, Nora, darling, is the water calm enough to please your exacting little ladyship?" she asked, gaily, as she greeted Mrs. O'Bryne in the accustomed and favourite apartment of the rector's wife.

"Perhaps it is, if that wee cloud in the horizon does not get bigger in the next hour," returned the lady, with an answering smile. "I certainly was not intended for an islander, Thyra," she continued, "I have such a decided horror of perils by water—and none at all of perils by land. I used to hunt when I was a girl, before I married a sober clergyman and had no more fear on a horse than on the drawing-room floor. So I am not altogether a coward, you see."

"You should learn to swim, Noar; that is the only remedy," returned Thyra, gravely. "I can float for an hour together and swim a mile at the least."

"Very true, but as Lough Corrib is twenty-seven miles long and two broad I am afraid that would not be very useful in extremities," laughed Mrs. O'Bryne, "and as to my attempting to learn I should directly be drowned in the first lesson as a melancholy warning to ambitious matrons. However, I have arranged far more skilfully than that, mavourneen," she went on. "Mr. Vesel is going to bring up a boat from the next boat-house that will carry us all, instead of trusting our two precious lives to your elfin barque, that is only fit for the venturesome to sail in. And, in good sooth, there he comes. Why, Thyra, what a remarkable telescope he must possess to see round the shrubbery that you had arrived," whispered the mischievous Nora, as the young man entered the room.

(To be continued.)

GOOD FRUIT FROM EPSOM RACES.—The poor children at the South Metropolitan District Schools at Sutton had thrown to them by persons passing to and from Epsom on the Derby and Oaks days coins amounting to no less than £95, amongst which were sovereigns and a large proportion of silver. The managers of the schools have directed that the money shall be employed in giving the elder children a day at the Crystal Palace, and some suitable entertainment to the younger ones at some other time and place.

THE SULTAN OF ZANZIBAR'S SISTER.—As the Dresden papers have been making mention of a sister of the Seyyid of Zanzibar, who lives in the Saxon capital, we may be excused, since their statements are not very correct, if we give some particulars of her history. When she was quite a girl, a young German—a clerk, we believe, in a merchant's house at Zanzibar—managed, in spite of the restraints to which women are subjected in the East, to win her affections. In order to be united to him she escaped to Aden, and there she was married to her lover, and was also baptized. The brother of

the present Seyyid was then on the throne, and he and her other relatives, were of course, incensed at her elopement, her change of religion and her marriage to a Christian, and wholly disowned her. She accompanied her husband to Europe, and they resided at Hamburg till he met with an accident about 1870, which caused his death. His widow, who had become a highly educated and accomplished woman, removed to Dresden for the education of her children. Her noble character, her beauty, and her romantic history have attracted the attention of many people of influence in Germany, including, we understand, some members of the Imperial Family, and when the Seyyid's visit to England was arranged, it was felt that an opportunity was presented for effecting a reconciliation between her and the brother from which she has been so long estranged. With a view to this she has come to England, and is at present staying in London.

ONLY A CUR.

ONLY a cur—a blind, old, meagre creature,
Mongrel in blood, long-jawed, and lean of limb;
Ugly enough in colour, shape and feature—

Who seeks a lady's pet would pass by him,
And yet within that form uncouth, angainly,
Are things not always linked to human dust—
Virtues that oft in man we look for vainly—
Courage, affection, faithfulness to trust.

Only a cur—'tis very true, I own it;
I have no record of his pedigree;
The stock he sprang from, I have never known it,
If high or low his family may be.

He should be poor indeed to suit his master,
To whom a bank-note sometimes is a stew;
But not the wealth of Rothschild or of Astor
Would tempt me now to let old Towser go.

You see that strippling in the meadow mowing—
Well-knit for eighteen years, and strong and
litho;

'Longside the foremost in the row a-going;
Steady as clockwork moves his sweeping scythe.
Well, that's my boy, and something like me, rather
In face than mind—in habits not, they say;
The son is far more careful than the father,
Earns much, spends little—he'll be rich one day.

Old Towser one time saved that boy from dying,
Twelve years ago, round here the story known,
You'd scarcely think, as you behold him lying,
He fought a wolf, and mastered him alone.
Even if the service we don't care to measure,
The feat's not one that every dog can do—
That's right, old Towser! raise your ears with
pleasure,

And wag your tail—you know I speak of you.

Since then the true old dog has stood as sentry
Over our household camp by night and day;
Nor rogue nor robber ever made an entry
With Towser's vigilance to stop the way.
Nor looks, nor bolts, nor bars were ever needed;
We slept serenely while he stood on guard,
Each sound suspicious by his quick ears heeded—
His fangs intruders from our slumbers barred.

Faithful to us, distrustful to a stranger,
Obedient to a sign expressing will;
True to his master, fearless of all danger,
Ill-fed at times; but fond and grateful still—
No sleek and pampered dog of finest breeding,
Reared in a palace and with dainties fed,
Has ever shown high qualities exceeding
Those of this brute, base-born and underbred.

Only a cur, indeed! If such you name him,
Where be your dogs of honour and degree?
Since none with duties left undone can blame him,
What brute ranks higher in its kind than he?
If human-kind would do as well its duty,
The world were spared one-half its woe and
pain,

Worth would seem better in our eyes than beauty,
And deeds, not looks, our admiration gain.

J. D. E.

A WARNING to actors is conveyed by the misfortunes of a comedian at one of the Baltimore theatres. Whilst on the stage he was suddenly seized with paralysis of the throat, together with the lips, tongue, and salivary gland, and it was found on examination that he had been poisoned by cosmetics used for colouring his lips and cheeks.

THE PREMIER AND OUR LATEST VISITOR.—The quidnuncs have got hold of an interesting conversation which is reported to have passed between Mr. Disraeli and the Sultan of Zanzibar at their interview. After a short conversation, Dr. Badger, who was acting as interpreter said, "His Highness wishes to know whether in this country the grand visier exercises his office in daily fear of poison or the dagger?" "No," answered the Prime Minister,

"people do not envy him his office; they simply pity him." Dr. Badger translated the sentence. There was a pause. [Suddenly the face of the Sultan was lit up by a hearty smile. "Ah," he said, "I see; you are a very clever grand vizier."

BEGGARS.

THERE is a kind of beggar who kills one's sympathies; as one driven to beggary by cruel fate awakens them. Blind, and lame, and helpless people must touch our hearts. But the individual who provides himself with two shoe-strings, or a cake of pink soap, or three toy books, and offers them for your purchase, making sure that you will either give him four times the value, or better still, offer him money without taking his wares, is utterly disgusting, especially when he trudges about on a stout pair of limbs, and has arms to match, and eyes that, like those of the mock grandmother in Little Red Riding Hood, are "bright enough to see you with, my dear."

There is something about this impostor which makes one sorry that one should really be obliged to consider him a man. Yet he shows a perseverance worthy of a better cause. Indeed, his power in this line is only equalled by that of a life insurance agent. Refuse to go through the farce of buying the wares which he dumps in your lap, as you sit in a car, or thrusts into your hand in the street, and he at once shows his indignation. Sometimes he calls on you with a letter—always signed by a clergyman of whom you never heard, for the very excellent reason that he is entirely imaginary—which begs you to patronise him as an honest man who has met with misfortune.

The stock in trade to which the letter draws your attention is either a card of bone buttons, or a few sheets of coarse writing paper, for which he asks a price that would provide you with the finest stationery in the market, and leave something to spare. Even at this rate, he is much better pleased to take a charitable x p n e and depart with his load enlightened.

If there are any beggars who deserve to be despised, they are these men. Honest poor people, who have cheap wares which they strive to sell from door to door, are as respectable in their way as though they were large merchants. They ask no favours. They make a fair profit on their sales. They have no letters from any one, and what they want you to do is to buy. You see that at once, and if you have a heart you'll do it, too.

I rejoice when I hear that the man who has sold slippers is able to stock a little shop somewhere; or that the old apple-woman on the corner has "savings in the bank;" but if my heart grows cold and stony, it is to the creature with a snivel and a whine, a lying story in his mouth, and a ridiculous pretence of wanting to sell you something with which he does not even expect to impose upon you. That sort of thing is really worse than taking to a hand-organ and a corner.

M. K. D.

"HE WOULD BE A GENTLEMAN."—A ludicrous instance of this foolish ambition occurred the other day at Brentford, where a clerk named Rooke, convicted of swearing in the streets—the penalty for which, under an Act of George II., is one shilling per oath for a day labourer, crookman soldier or common sailor; two shillings for every other person under the degree of a gentleman; and five shillings for all of or above that degree—claimed to be a gentleman, and insisted on paying the highest penalty. By consenting to this self-appraisal the magistrates acted illegally, for Rooke's position is that of a menial servant. It is not generally known, that the rank and precedence of every Englishman, who possesses either are strictly defined by law. A reference to any table of precedence among men and women, or to a list of the persons present at a levée, will show the order of this arrangement from the princes of the royal blood down to the officers of the army and navy, who occupy the lowest step of legal rank, coming after doctors, masters of arts, barristers, and other small deer. The officers and all above them in rank are, of course, gentlemen. But, as an ancient legal authority has observed, "We make gentlemen good cheap in England," and by courtesy of law, several other sorts of men, such as attorneys, surgeons, authors, and other professional people, whose employment is not servile, together with persons living on their means and "bearing the port, charge and countenance" of gentlemen, may write "gent." after their names without invalidating any legal document in which it may appear. Still the line must be drawn somewhere, and it is drawn at tradesmen. Clerks rank with artisans, even Civil Service Clerks, it has been decided in the superior courts, are not entitled to the "affix." At all events, Mr. Rooke, or Shosta, as he is called by another reporter, may be assured that profane swearing, even with a maximum fine, is neither the mark nor the qualification of a gentleman, and that an opinion of shame can never become the source of honour.



[A CHARMING REFLECTION.]

THE SECRET OF POMEROYS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Avivig Bands," "The Snapt Link," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XX.

Talk of love in winter time,
When the hailstorm hurries,
While the robin sparks of rime
Shakes from leafy myrtles.
Never speak of love with scorn;
Such were direct treason.
Love was made for eve and morn,
And for every season.

"GENERAL POMEROYS seems astonished at what should surely be a familiar sound," said Lena, calmly, regaining as it seemed her composure with much more self-control than her companion.

The general started round at the sound of the quiet, sneering voice from the window, to which he had rushed on the first startling report of fire-arms which had interrupted the colloquy with his singular guest.

"It is some insolence of your infamous crew, woman," he exclaimed, angrily. "Poaching again on my preserves, I'll answer for it. But I'll not endure the outrage longer," he continued. "Mark me, Lena, I have appeared to be blind and deaf to the lawlessness of your gang, but my patience may be exhausted, and then I shall show no mercy, I can tell you."

Lena gave a contemptuous smile, but with an averted face that prevented the daring bravado of the look being too obvious to her host.

"General, you are angry and, therefore, unwise," she said, turning towards him with a yet more quiet defiance than open insolence would have exhibited. "What harm can the absence of a few hares and rabbits from your rich preserves do to the owner of this castle? Our camp-kettle is sadly empty at times; and we are but eating the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table when we get a dinner out of the woods."

A deep crimson tide rushed over the haggard features of the general, and his hand was involuntarily clenched, as if to punish with summary chastisement the bold gipsy queen.

But something in her unmoved attitude, or perhaps a quick memory that darted like a lightning flash over his brain arrested the impulse, and he sank once again on a chair to conceal mayhap the gust of impotent passion that shook his every limb.

"Take care you do not carry the licence too far, at any rate, Lena," he said, when he could command

his voice. "You know as well as I do that the example would be of an irremediable evil in the neighbourhood were I to let your people go scot free. Why remain here?" he added, eagerly. "If you cannot govern your camp, at least go where their licence would not work so much mischief. I will find you money, if necessary, for the journey."

The gipsy queen laughed slightly. "If you are serious, it does but prove an ignorance of our habits that seems folly in an experienced man like you, general," she said. "We have little use for gold, and if we had need of it we can obtain it at our pleasure. But," she went on, "be content, General Pomeroy, be content. There needs but the completion of our business for me to arrange to move to more genial climes than your cold land. Do you remember what I was saying just as that popgun startled us?"

The general gave a half-bewildered glance round as he indulged in a forced laugh.

"I suppose you want to try my patience to the utmost," he said. "You cannot for a moment mean me to think you are asking such a question in your sober senses. You had better retract at once, Lena," he went on, "and I will do what I can for you in such an event."

The woman placed herself on a chair close to his own and bent forward till her voice came soft and yet like a warning bombshell in his ears.

"General Pomeroy, I am not insane, nor do I wish to bring ruin on your name and the descendant of a long race. But still I persist in what I said just now. I shall find a wife for your son, and on that one event will hang perhaps his life and yours. Are you content to yield, general?" she continued, with a keen, steel-like look. "Pause ere you decide, for my temper is not of the mildest, and I should be sorry to make rash vows that, according to the laws of our tribe, cannot be broken."

"Pshaw! nonsense! perfect charlatan's cant," he returned, impatiently. "Mr. Pomeroy's destiny is in all probability arranged long since, and, were it otherwise, do you suppose you have anything to do with the marriage of my heir—your, a wandering gipsy?" he went on, angrily. "It is an insult past bearing."

"It will have to be submitted to, nevertheless," returned Lena, firmly. "General, I know not whether it is really necessary to speak more plainly as to the past. In any case, my terms are unchangeable. I demand the hand of Basil Pomeroy for a bride worthy of him," she persisted, in a hissing whisper.

"It is already arranged. He will marry the woman destined for him from his childhood," was the reply.

"Lena, spare this mad, irritating folly. Ask anything else, and you shall not find me a niggard," he continued, in a tone that had more of pleading than of the determined command that should have belonged to the high-born owner of the castle when conversing with an humble gipsy woman.

"Nothing else will suffice; I am resolved," was the calm reply.

"And for whom—what is the wild fancy you have conceived?" asked the general.

"For one fair and young and worthy of him," she said. "And as to Melanie Pomeroy, if she were to place her hand in that of the cousin whom she has been trained up to love, that day should be the darkest hour in the annals of your family, proud general, yes, darker even than the hour of her christening, which brought the tidings of her father's murder."

The general cowered under the bold word that was yet a forbidden sound in his presence.

What would have been his reply was then and ever must remain a secret in his own breast, for at the moment there was another sharp, clanging ring of fire-arms in the silence, and the general hastily pulled a large bell-handle near him and motioned Lena to an inner and retired chamber within the sitting-room of the castle's lord.

He heeded not that the door was partly ajar. He took no pains to close it behind him as he waited the answer to his summons. His whole soul seemed bent on the coming domestic and the reply he would receive to his questions.

"Swainson, what was it? Any poaching going on?" he asked, sharply.

"I hardly think so, my lord. The gipsies seldom venture out at this time of day," returned the man, with an unusual gravity of expression.

"Then what on earth can it be? Surely none of the men would dare, nor the visitors in the neighbourhood," was the chilling response to the uncomfortable looks and gestures rather than the actual words of the well-trained Scotchman.

"Very likely; your honour knows best," was the reply. "It's not for me nor the likes of me to judge my betters," he went on. "I'm blind and deaf when it suits the orders of my betters."

"Are you all conspiring to drive me mad?" was the impatient remark of his master. "Who do you suppose is shooting in yon wood?"

"Please your honour, I don't know, unless it is Mr. Basil. I believe he went out a little while ago, and with his gun under his arm. However, I don't mean to say he had any thoughts of shooting, please your honour, nor that the firing is his."

The general stamped his foot impatiently.

His face had as complete an expression of surprise as a well-trained servant could exhibit.

It was indeed a rare occurrence for the general to resist the slightest wish of his petted niece.

But his brow had contracted angrily during the first part of her speech and he waited impatiently from her till she whispered the last words.

"Child, you do not know, you do not understand," he said, sharply. "Do not meddle in what you cannot guess the reasons for what I do. And after all," he went on, in a louder tone, "after all this is simple nonsense, just because a young fellow is late and has not returned in time for dinner. I am foolish to make any fuss about such an ordinary occurrence."

And he tried to laugh scornfully at this picture of the situation.

It did not last long, that constrained and unnatural merriment.

Here he could look for sympathy from his companions the door opened and two or three of the domestics came, with averted and doubting looks into the room.

There was the absent Basil's own valet; there was the man despatched on the important errand.

And, lingering somewhat behind, as if not accustomed to the saloons of the great, was the elderly lodge-keeper who had been mentioned as "Duncan," and whose face alone might have served for a key to the tidings about to be given of the missing one.

"What does all this mean?" asked the general impatiently. "Why on earth are you making such a procession as this, Basil?"

The man shook his head significantly.

"Please, general, we thought it best that you should hear for yourself," he said, respectfully.

"Duncan says he saw Mr. Basil go to the wood, and that an hour or so afterwards he heard the shot, and—"

"—and—," he continued, "Duncan will tell the rest."

The father was perhaps the utterly engrossed to remember the presence of others perhaps even more interested than himself.

Or else he believed it wiser to let the whole truth come with its original force before them.

He turned sternly to the awe-stricken keeper.

"Speak," he said. "Say what you know; only let it be without imaginative additions, mind you."

Duncan shook his head sadly.

"I fear that it will be needless, your honour. It is not for me to add to or take away. But the truth is the truth, and as I am here talking to your honour I am speaking it from the very bottom of my heart."

I heard the shot in the wood—as I take it your honour did the same—and, as my little grandchild was there, and quite fit to open the gates and speak to the gentlemen, if any came through, I thought I'd just go and see if it was poachers, or anything worse. So I set off."

He went on, with a still more hesitating air, "and—just walked by the way of the wood; and I—I found a small pool of blood there, your honour, and this, in the midst of the boggy and the stones."

And Duncan displayed a handkerchief, deeply stained with blood, the corner of which bore the initials "B. P." marked in dark hair that had a strong resemblance to the rich tresses of Melanie Pomeroy's.

General Pomeroy gazed at it with a panic-stricken, haggard horror in his sunken eyes and worn cheeks, but his very utterance seemed paralyzed by the catastrophe which congealed like blood and brain.

Melanie glided like a ghost to the spot.

She quickly drew the ominous article from her uncle's helpless fingers.

She examined it as if life and all that could belong to it hung in the balance.

Then she quickly laid it down on a table near with a dream-like, unsteady movement, but still fearless and calm as the statue that looked down from a neighbouring pedestal on the agitated group within its very shadow.

But then, as the sickening truth dawned gradually on her mind, she gasped, suddenly:

"Oh, Basil, my cousin!"

And the next instant she sank, insensible and cold, into the arms of Eustace Neville that were hastily extended for her timely help as she was falling helplessly on the floor.

CHAPTER XXII.

The first rays of an early spring sun were shining brilliantly on one of the small and dashing white villages between Coblenz and Mayence on the banks of the fair and stately Rhine.

A frowning castle crowned the heights under which the peaceful hamlet slumbered, but, whatever had been its original object it had long ceased to fulfil any purpose save as an ornament to the beautiful landscape, a memorial of past greatness, and a favourite resort for the village children in their hours of sport.

Yet, no; there was one other use to which the stately ruins were appropriated.

Some years before a stranger had appeared in the

quiet spot, with letters that gave him full permission to dwell in the ruined tennement, which formed part of the possessions of the Baron von Steinheim.

He selected three or four of the least desolate of the apartments, furnished them with the simple, necessary articles that could suffice for his own and his son's and his servant's use. Then all was concluded under the excitement of the event was concluded.

He remained in his room, dwelling with unwavering constancy, carrying on a little intercourse with the villagers, as the baron and needed necessities of life were required from or arrived from them, or they repaired to him for the instruction or medical aid which he was alike able and willing to give.

Still he was respected and liked, and his young son had been a noted favourite among the rustic, simple wine-drillers of the place, and then, although the dress and habits of the stranger were as unsophisticated and plain as the meagre peasant, they were always recognized as belonging to a very different class.

The "Herr Fritz" and the "young Herr" were at once members of the little community and yet raised above it in the respect that superior habits and education ever demand in the "Waterland."

The "young Herr" had gone on his travels; the Herr Fritz, however, more modest and more reserved since his son's departure, remained at home.

Rarely was he seen, out of the precincts of the castle, and the servants became almost the medium of intercourse between the Englishman and his honest German neighbours; but still his presence seemed to give a stability and importance to the rustic village, and whenever Carl appeared he was assailed with inquiries and respectful hopes and anxieties as to his lord and the absent son.

But on this morning Carlo was especially the object of curious interest.

He had been to Obdessa, whether he repaired from time to time to supply the deficiencies of the village stores, and, as it was whispered, to bring letters and money, and news to the gloomy and silent Herr Fritz.

Carlo hurried from the landing-place, and, with a few good humoured nods and greetings, and now and then a matter of business among the children, escaped as rapidly as possible the flood of gossip that would have overpowered him, and climbed the steep ascent with far more agility than could have been expected from a man far on in life.

But Carlo had apparently some urgent cause for haste; of this it was not worth while to enquire.

He sprang from height to height with the agility that the stimulus of excitement might perchance supply when youth was past, till at length he stood on a level with the castle wall, and a few more minutes sufficed to bring him into his master's presence.

The Herr Fritz was a man of some forty-five or fifty years of age.

His features were sharpened by time or by sorrow, but they were evidently of a comfortable English type in former days.

And there were yet portions of the still abundant hair that proved its original colour to have been a rich bright chestnut that would accord with the dark gray eyes and healthy skin that are considered the type of the true Englishman.

True he was thin and wasted now, and the eyes that were once full and bright were sunk within deep furrows, and the smiles which had once expressed cordial and genial gaiety had become gradually compressed into thin and anxious lips, with little trace of the red rich blood which had once coloured their veins.

He was seated before a book, as usual; the sole amusement of his life had long been centred in studies which were at one time distasteful to him, but which were now his very existence.

But when the door opened and Carlo came into the room, he looked up with eager interest.

"Well, Carlo, what news? Letters, papers from him, my boy?" he asked, eagerly.

"Letters, there are—oh, least one," said the servant, slowly. "And there are papers, in what I think is a strange handwriting. But you know better than I do," he went on, "and perhaps I am mistaken."

He drew the packets from a bag he carried as he spoke, and laid them on the table before his master.

There were two newspapers and one letter, sealed and tied in the old-fashioned style, which had something of exclusive privacy in the precautions which the modern envelopes lack.

Then he retired a few paces, and busied himself in some trifling duties, as an excuse, perhaps, to learn the news just brought.

The Herr Fritz pursued the letter with deep attention. It deserved apparently a moment and even

third consideration, ere he again folded it and replaced it in its receptacle.

He tore open the newspaper with an equally intense interest and ran his eye impatiently over each column, till he appeared to reach some sought-for intelligence.

His lips parted in a bitter smile—he left the print open at that especial place, when he laid it on the table before him, as if to refer again hastily to its lines.

"Carlo," he called, at length.

The man stood before him in an instant, his eyes gleaming with hidden interest at the summons.

"You have news of my young master?" he said, somewhat hesitating, as he asked the question.

"Of, but not from, Carlo. And that would have a strange influence were I not almost too inured to shocks and suffering to yield to their power. Look here," he added, pointing to the passage that had attracted his attention. "Is not this at once a terror and a triumph?"

Carlo put on the spectacles that were now necessary for his failing sight, and so tremblingly that his fingers refused to fix them in their proper place.

A sorrowful smile crossed his master's expressive features.

"Poor Carlo," he said, "you are even less master of yourself when these miserable memories are concerned than I am. Stay, I will read it to you. Sit down, good friend, you must be tired with your long walk, and neither you nor I have the strength and activity that would once have carried us over your heights without one thought of fatigue. Why, do not hesitate," he said as the old feudal respect of the domestic shrank from obeying the mandate.

"We are companions in life, and we will probably be united in death, my old friend. There is little to divide us in this old castle, which speaks of Heaven's grandeur rather than of man's distinctions."

Carlo bowed his head in respectful acquiescence, and then the Herr Fritz began to read aloud from the newspaper that had just been the object of his earnest perusal.

But ere he did so he suddenly looked up at his companion with a quick, sharp glance that might well search out the truth it demanded.

"Carlo, I need scarcely ask, and yet it would be a complete satisfaction to my mind if you will answer me as faithfully as you have ever done since the years we have spent together in weal and woe."

"You have but to speak," returned the man, firmly. "If I answer it will be the truth, and it would be a strange question that I should be silent to when my lord asks it from a servant born in his family's service."

"Say rather, a friend, good Carlo," returned the Herr Fritz. "But to the point in question. Did you ever give Eustace one shadow of an idea as to his real name and origin?"

"Never," was the firm reply. "Did I not give my word when we left English soil and English waters that my lips would never utter the old familiar names; till you yourself unsaid them by your own command? Do you suppose I would break such a pledge, Herr Fritz?"

"No, no, no," returned the master. "I do not doubt; I am sure of your honesty and truth as my own—and yet, by some remarkable fatality that looks like a following up of that ill-fated marriage, he has actually gone to the very spot, he has actually nearly lost his life in the dwarf hills, after having spent years in safety while climbing the most giddy heights of this mighty land, and—harken, Carlo, it is scarcely to be credited, hardly to be breathed beyond a whisper. Do you know that even while Eustace has been dwelling yonder, his son—Cyril's son—has disappeared and, there is little doubt, been murdered in these woods—Rosamound Woods. Do you comprehend, Carlo?"

He might well ask the question. The domestic's face was literally aghast in terror and surprise, his eyes literally opened till the whites were visible all round, his lips quivered as if they could scarcely frame themselves for the next question.

"But not by his hand, not by your son's hand, Herr Fritz?" he gasped.

"No, no, I believe—nay, I could swear it could not be so," replied the gentleman, quickly. "But he was—he is, for aught I know—in the toils of one who seems to know more than I believed any human being but ourselves could even suspect. The letter is in a strange writing, and without any signature that could identify the writer, but there is no doubt that it is from one who would either extort money or influence as the price of information which it rather hints at than gives," he continued, turning again to the documents before him.

Carlo drew a long breath ere he again stopped the gentleman with a last eager question.

"Only tell me one thing, my lord. Tell me that Mr. Eustace is well and free. I cannot listen to all

the tanglements of the papers with that on my heart.

Herr Fritz smiled sadly at the simple question of his trusty attendant.

"He was safe when this was written, Carlo, but Heaven above knows to what danger he is now exposed."

(To be continued)

HUNTED FOR HER MONEY.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE BRANDS had procured their close carriage at Bala, Randal Brand being his own driver out and from Trevor Farm.

The two men did not care to take into their confidence a stranger, especially as they foresaw that, in their attempts to gain possession of the fugitive heiress, they would probably resort to certain acts—such as the poisoning of the hounds—which a coachman might not sanction.

In short, their policy of secrecy and caution was carried out in this matter as in all others.

But, upon their return to Bala, they purposed putting in fresh horses and taking up a driver who knew the roads thoroughly, and to push on at the highest rate of speed for a certain point upon the seacoast, at which point they had telegraphed Mrs. Brand to meet them.

As we have said, there were two roads to Bala—a direct road, rough and little used, traversing rickety bridges, one of which had been completely carried away by a recent freshet, and the other the usual rugged highway upon which Jones the farm-labourer had come to grief.

Arrived at the fork of these two roads, Randal halted to deliberate.

The direct road was three miles shortest. It was dark, but he could trace through the gloom the openings of the two roads. He turned to the right, and hurried onward without a shadow of hesitation.

Now it happened that Sir Lionel Charlton had arrived about nightfall of that very evening at Bala, just twenty-four hours later than the arrival of the Brands.

He had proceeded to an inn, procured supper, and set about engaging a horse and vehicle to convey him at once to Trevor Farm. Untimely as the hour of his visit might prove, he was full of uneasiness and anxiety about his young betrothed and was determined to see her that night.

"It will be difficult to procure a horse at this hour, sir," said the innkeeper, to whom he had addressed himself. "You want it, I suppose, after the concert? The Eistedfodd is a great success, sir, this year. We have a great many strangers here, some even from London."

"Indeed!" said Sir Lionel. "That must be quite a compliment to your musicians. Are those strangers musicians also, or merely music lovers?"

"Well, I can't rightly say, sir. They don't seem to show much interest in the concert, I must confess. They are gone out in a close carriage now, sir. They are stranger here, and asked me a great many questions last night about the roads and the way to Trevor Farm."

The young baronet started. A conviction of the identity of those two strangers who did not show interest in the concert flashed upon his mind, and he said, quickly:

"I must have the horse immediately. Procure one at any cost, with a spring vehicle of some description. I must set out for Trevor Farm at once."

Expense not being considered, the innkeeper succeeded in procuring a horse and spring-cart, with a driver who knew the roads, and in ten minutes thereafter Sir Lionel Charlton was on his way to Trevor Farm.

"Shall we take the direct road, sir?" asked the driver, as they quitted the town. "It's three miles shorter."

"The direct road, of course. Drive as rapidly as possible, my good fellow. How dark the night is! It will be a guinea in your pocket if we get there safely and in time."

The driver pushed onwards with increased speed.

Sir Lionel had heard that the household at Trevor Farm was large, and that several servants were employed there. He had no fears that any violence would be perpetrated in taking Beatrice prisoner, but he knew that Colonel Brand was the girl's legal guardian, and that he had a warrant for Beatrice's arrest as a runaway ward, and a person of unsound mind "unfit to be at large."

"My poor Beatrice!" thought the lover. "My poor darling! Perhaps at this moment the Brands are at Trevor Farm. Perhaps she has again escaped them. Oh, Heaven defend and protect her!"

The direct road to Trevor Farm comprised a distance of some nine miles. About four of these were accomplished, when the horse suddenly went dead lame.

The driver alighted, and with his lantern examined the horse's foot. "It's no use, sir," he said, "we can't go on except at a snail's pace. We'll have to turn back and procure another horse."

"Is there no farmhouse near?"

"None nearer than Trevor Farm, sir."

Sir Lionel repressed a groan. He could not go on with a lame horse. In case of an encounter with the Brands, and a rescue of Beatrice from their hands, he would need a strong, sound animal.

"Is it a straight road to Trevor Farm?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, as straight as may be, sir."

"Then I'll get out and walk," said the young baronet. "Do you go back and obtain another horse, and follow me as fast as you can. Give me the lantern. You can get another."

Seizing the lantern, Sir Lionel descended to the ground and walked swiftly up the road.

The driver turned about and set out upon his way back to Bala.

About a mile farther on the young baronet came to the swollen creek, which, with its rushing, rapid current and wide extent, looked like a river.

And now he discovered that the bridge was gone.

"There must be a ford below, or another bridge," he said to himself, controlling his impatience. "I cannot swim across here with this current; I must seek the ford."

Some three miles farther down the creek, the course of which he followed, he discovered a shaky little bridge, which he crossed. He then walked up the river bank to the point from which the bridge had been torn away, finding himself again in the direct road to Trevor Farm.

"It has taken me a long time to do this distance," he said to himself, halting. "I must have walked seven miles. It must be nearly time for my driver to return. I wonder if he will see that this bridge is gone. I had better leave the lantern as a danger signal."

He found a tree overhanging the bank, and climbed up its low branches, hanging his lantern upon a limb that extended toward the opposite bank.

As he returned to the grounds, he heard a sound of wheels rapidly approaching.

"It is coming from the direction of Trevor Farm," he thought, with a start. "It may be the Brands."

The carriage came near, not abating its speed. Evidently its driver was not aware that the bridge was gone.

"Halt!" cried Sir Lionel, waving his arm in the darkness. "The bridge has been carried away!"

The carriage stopped abruptly. Randal Brand—for this was the equipage of the Brands—took up a lighted lantern from beneath his box and waved it aloft.

A single glance assured him that the bridge was indeed gone. He flashed the rays of his lantern upon our hero. Sir Lionel's hat shaded his face, which the Brands would not have known in any case. Sir Lionel's gray tuxed suit was sufficiently commonplace not to attract attention.

"So the bridge is gone!" said Randal Brand. "Is there any other bridge, or a ford, near here?"

"Three miles below, sir," said Sir Lionel, promptly.

Randal Brand uttered terrible imprecations.

The carriage door opened and Colonel Brand put out his head.

"What's up?" he asked.

"The confounded bridge is gone," said the son.

"The ford is three miles below. This person here has saved our lives. I say, you fellow, do you know the road?"

"Yes, sir," said Sir Lionel, loudly.

A shriek came from within the carriage. Beatrice had been silent as death from the moment of her capture until now.

Colonel Brand clammed the door hastily shut, and no further sound came from Beatrice.

Sir Lionel's blood boiled. He comprehended the truth that his young betrothed was within the carriage, and that her relatives were bearing her away. He felt an instinctive impulse to attack both the Brands, but prudence restrained him. While he was rapidly turning over in his mind a plan of procedure Randal Brand again addressed him, roughly:

"See here, you fellow, you know the road; suppose you climb up here and guide me as far as the road opposite this point. I'll give you half a sovereign for your trouble."

"All right, sir," said the young baronet.

He climbed up to the box, seized the reins, turned the horses' heads down the stream, and drove at a good pace.

Randal Brand made haste to conceal his lantern under the box, being unwilling to expose his face to the gaze of even a casual countryman.

"I suppose you are on your way home on foot from the Eistedfodd," remarked Randal Brand, as they sped onwards. "A half-guinea will pay you for your extra six miles walk. Drive faster."

"I thought I heard a woman scream inside," observed Sir Lionel, roughening his voice and speaking with assumed carelessness.

"Probably. I have a lunatic with her keeper inside. She is my sister," said Randal Brand, unblushingly. "Just whip that aigh horse. He seems to lag."

Sir Lionel's brains were busy. How was he to rescue Beatrice from her enemies? He might go with them to Bala and there denounce them, but the law was on their side. Before he could do anything they would escape with their prisoner. They were both powerful men, both probably armed to the teeth. Stratagem would avail far better than force.

They arrived at the shaky bridge, which was barely wide enough for a waggon to cross. It had no parapet. The water under it roared and rushed like a fierce torrent.

"The water looks very deep," said Randal Brand, leaning over and endeavouring to peer down into the noisy flood.

As quick as thought Sir Lionel placed both his hands upon his companion, and with a quick and powerful thrust sent him headlong from the box into the creek.

The wild yell of Randal Brand was lost in the noise of the wheels, as Sir Lionel whipped the horses and sped onwards.

The carriage windows were closely shut. The occupants within had no suspicion of what was occurring outside.

For the next mile the young baronet ran the horses at a terrible pace. The carriage rolled from side to side, like a ship at sea. Colonel Brand, in a deadly fright, let down one of the windows and shouted to him to stop. But not until a full mile had been passed and the horses began to pant and slacken their speed instinctively, did the baronet loosen his hold upon the reins or put up his whip.

"Can't you stop them?" yelled Colonel Brand. "We shall all be killed. What is the matter? What made them run away?"

Sir Lionel brought the horses down to a walk, then to a halt.

"Could you stop outside a moment?" he asked, in a shrill whisper.

"Why, yes. What do you want, Randal? Is the harness broken?"

Colonel Brand alighted, carefully closing the carriage-door behind him, and approached the horses' heads.

"It's not Randal," said Sir Lionel, coolly. "It's the new driver. Randal toppled over into the river back there, just before the horses began to run."

"Randal! In the river! Merciful Heaven! We must turn about then. Quick! Do you hear? Turn. Who are you?"

"Sir Lionel Charlton, at your service," said our hero, with a laugh. "Stand aside, old man!"

He struck the horses a stinging blow apiece, and they flew away like mad. A bullet whistled past our hero—another—and another; but in an instant more he was beyond the reach of these unpleasant missiles, flying onward as fast as his horses could carry him. He plied the whip liberally during the next mile, but the hard roads and the furious pace soon exhausted the animals.

Then Sir Lionel stopped them, descended from the box, and opened the carriage door.

"Beatrice!" he called, softly. "Beatrice, darling!"

He helped her to the ground, and they set out on foot in the direction of Bala.

"I recognized your voice when you spoke to Randal Brand, Lionel," said Beatrice, clinging to his arm. "I shrieked that you might know that I was there. Oh, thank Heaven that you came in time! But is not that the sound of wheels? What can it mean? Some new danger?"

"I think my own cart is returning. Wait. It is close upon us."

He called out loudly. The cart was close upon them—Sir Lionel's own returning vehicle, with a strong and fresh horse. The lovers entered the cart, and went bowling over the road towards Bala.

"Do you suppose that Randal Brand is drowned, Lionel?" asked Beatrice, in a whisper.

"By no means. He will get the good ducking he deserves, but will swim ashore."

"Yes, but he is an indifferent swimmer. Lionel, I fear that this affair may get you into trouble. Colonel Brand is legally my guardian, you know, and they have got out some kind of warrant for my arrest. They will surely recapture me in the morning, and—"

"In the morning, Beatrix, they will no longer have power over you. To-night you are Colonel Brand's ward. In the morning—by daylight, I mean, for it is morning now—you will be my wife! Lady Folliot has given her consent to our marriage. I have a special license in my pocket. The clergyman at Bala has been notified, and will be up and waiting for us. After I heard from the innkeeper at Bala that two men, whom I believed to be the Brands, were gone to Trevor Farm, I sent a note to the clergyman, informing him that we should probably be at his house about midnight. We shall find him up, although it must be nearly three in the morning now. The special license I procured at Doctors' Commons in London, and have had it in my possession two or three days."

"But will not Colonel Brand arrest you for abducting a minor?" inquired Beatrix, anxiously.

"I'll take the risk of that. I don't believe that he will care to go into a court of law, in face of what you and your friends can testify!"

They drove direct to the clergyman's house, and found the rector up and waiting for them.

In face of the special license and the statement Sir Lionel Charlton made of the cause of the untimely marriage, the clergyman could make no objections to performing the ceremony.

Half an hour later, Sir Lionel Charlton and Beatrix Roban were husband and wife.

"We will be married again during canonical hours, in church, and with due ceremony, if you wish, Beatrix," said Sir Lionel, tenderly. "This hasty ceremony gives me the right to protect you. We shall have no more trouble with the Brands."

The dawn was breaking. A train would leave for Chester a couple of hours later. Sir Lionel ordered breakfast to be served in his own private parlour. The time of waiting was spent in explanations, and in lovers' converse.

"We shall get away before the Brands return," said Sir Lionel, as the cab drove up to convey them to the station. "We shall go direct to Folliot Court, my darling. I have written a note to be delivered to Colonel Brand when he arrives."

The happy pair embarked for Chester, without seeing anything of Beatrix's enemies, and as they took their seats together in a first-class compartment without other occupants, and the train rolled out of the station Sir Lionel drew the tawny head of his young bride to his breast and whispered:

"You are safe now, Beatrix—safe for ever, my own wife!"

Half an hour after the departure of the now-married pair, Colonel Brand and his son, both bedraggled and forlorn, with haggard faces and furious eyes, drove up to the inn, with a broken carriage and a pair of half-dead horses.

The innkeeper hastened to deliver to the colonel the note which Sir Lionel had left for him. It contained only these words:

"COLONEL BRAND: Beatrix is now my wife. Proofs will be given you at the rectory. I am quite well aware that you would gladly prosecute me upon a charge of abducting a minor from her lawful guardian. Do so, if you wish, but you will find that in so doing you will but make your own ruin the more complete. You know whether your conscience is clear, whether you are able to stand up in a court of law and court investigation. Should you desire war, Lady Charlton and I may be found at Folliot Court. Should you desire peace, leave England!"

We need not attempt to depict the rage and consternation of the two conspirators.

They were in no condition for war. Their lawless attack upon Jones, their poisoning the hounds at Trevor Farm, and, more than all the rest, the fact that they were in the wrong and that any judge would decide against them in a suit-at-law, and that they were liable to prosecution for their treatment of Beatrix, decided them to accept the situation and beat a retreat.

Accordingly, they proceeded to the rendezvous at which Mrs. Brand awaited them, and the three made haste to leave England for the Continent.

CHAPTER LIII.

The false Miss Bermyngham was alone in her boudoir. Lady Folliot had gone down to the library, meeting there Mr. Lambton and Mr. Hyslop, as recorded.

The impostor was troubled and gloomy. A premonition of coming doom darkened her guilty soul. She knew that the baroness had gone down to consult her land-steward upon the affair of the recent murder.

"Can Hyslop be below now with Lady Folliot and Lambton?" she asked herself. "Is he here to say that his suspicions were all folly, and that he relinquishes further effort in the matter? The lake here has been dragged. No clue will ever be found to the mystery. There is only one point to guard against: Hyslop must not see me. He hated me. He has seen me made up for the stage many a time. I fancy that he would know me under all this paint and powder and hair-dye. I shall keep to my room until I hear that he has left Lincolnshire. And then I shall go to London for a change, or to Brighton. This thing has been a serious shock to me."

She tried to reassure herself—to laugh at her terrors—but she could not shake off this deadly oppression weighing more heavily upon her with every instant.

"If anything should happen," she mused, "I suppose I should be hanged. Caspar told me so. But they should never hang me, never! I ought to be prepared—no one knows what might happen."

She took out her keys, and, going into her dressing-room, unlocked her trunk and the toilet-chest within it.

From the latter receptacle she brought out a tiny phial, in which was a single white and transparent globule. She put this phial in her pocket.

Her jewel-boxes were open also, and the glimmer of jewels caught her gaze. A pink silk dinner-dress trimmed with point-lace lay on a chair. Scent-cases, with gold-stoppered bottles, littered the dressing-table. An Indian shawl was thrown carelessly upon a sofa.

With all her cowardly soul this guilty woman loved these things, and she muttered now, with a strange smile:

"Come what may, I have lived like a princess. I have been petted and flattered and fawned upon; I have dressed in silks and jewels; had a maid to wait upon me, and have lavished money to my heart's content. If I had been born to all this, I should have been as good as other women. It's not all my fault. If Caspar had been sober and industrious I might perhaps have been a good wife. What a strange life mine has been!"

She sighed, and returned to her boudoir.

She flung herself upon a pale blue silken couch, and half closed her eyes. Steps were heard in the hall. Lady Folliot came in quietly, yet with traces of excitement on her face.

Her ladyship had brought Hyslop and Lambton to the door of the boudoir, and had bidden them wait there a moment while she prepared Miss Bermyngham to see them. The door was not quite closed. The two men, without could hear, but could not see what transpired within.

"Nere, darling," said Lady Folliot, approaching the sofa, "do you feel better now, dear? Is the pain in your heart relieved?"

The impostor raised her eyelids a trifle.

"Yes, I feel better, Aunt Folliot," she said, in a low voice. "But I am ill yet. Is there any news?"

"Do you feel able to hear anything more about the murder, Nere, dearest?"

"Is there anything more to hear?" demanded the impostor. "Is the thing not ended yet? Of course, I want to hear it all, but all this wears upon me."

Has that Hyslop been here yet?"

"Yes, dear—"

"Did he recognize Finette? Has he found anybody that he thinks to be this Lillias Voe?"

"No, dear—"

"Of course not!" scoffed the false Miss Bermyngham. "Agatha Walden is dead—dead and buried. Tell this fellow to seek out the record of her death. Aunt Folliot, I am surprised that you should have allowed him to enter your house. But perhaps it is as well. He is satisfied now and is gone away, has he not?"

"Not yet, my dear. He is satisfied that the murderess is not in this house, but, my dear, be calm, he has made a most startling discovery—"

"A discovery!" she echoed, in a hollow whisper.

"Yes, dear. They found to-day in the lake a dagger. It had been newly flung there, and is not yet rusted. The body of Voe is to be exhumed and the wounds compared with the dagger."

Despite the paint and enamel, the impostor's face became ghastly.

Lady Folliot, not noticing the change in it, continued:

"Hyslop has charge of the dagger. It is so costly that it could not have belonged to one of the villagers, he thought, and he brought it to me to see if I had ever owned it. I recognized it in an instant. My dear, it is the very dagger with the jewelled hilt which you once showed me as having belonged to your father. I identified it as yours—"

"That maid of mine must have stolen it," muttered the impostor, sullenly and huskily.

"But, Nere, she died before I saw you, and you showed me the dagger, dear, here at Folliot Court. Perhaps you had not even missed it? How could any one have stolen it? Who was the thief? You will have no objections, my darling, to tell Mr. Hyslop that this dagger was your own property—"

The guilty creature leaped to her feet.

"I won't tell him!" she cried, in a high, shrill voice, whose tones fairly appalled Gordon Hyslop, as they struck familiarly upon his memory. "I won't see him. I won't be questioned. I won't be dragged into this awful murder case. Send him away. Tell him I am ill. Make him leave Folliot Fens. I won't see any one—"

The door swung open, and Gordon Hyslop walked into the room.

"I thought I was right!" said Hyslop, quietly. "Lillias Voe lives, Lady Folliot. Who is this woman?"

"My niece, Miss Bermyngham. Mr. Lambton, I call upon you to remove this person who insults my niece—"

"Your niece?" and Hyslop laughed. "I have seen this pretty blonde before. Wash the paint from her face and the dye from her hair, and you'll find a swarthy skin and black looks. She has a black heart, too, under that white gown. If I hadn't heard her voice, I should never have looked for Lillias Voe under that blonde mask!"

The guilty woman stood terror-stricken, her eyes not averting from his face.

"You are found out, Lillias Voe!" said Hyslop, with a touch of triumph. "You murdered your baby. You murdered your husband. Without doubt you murdered also the real Miss Bermyngham. I expected to find the murderess in Finette, and I brought an officer to arrest her. He is below in the shrubbery. I will call him now," and he moved toward the window. "Ah, you may brave it out a little longer, but the paint shall be washed from your face and washes shall restore your hair to its natural colour, and before your trial you shall be as you were months ago in looks."

He called loudly from the window.

At the same moment, the false Miss Bermyngham, the real Lillias Voe, drew her hand from her pocket and put it to her mouth. She crunched the transparent globule between her small teeth, an odd smile on her rose-red lips.

"Lady Folliot," she said, turning to the affrighted and bewildered baroness, "it's all true. I am Lillias Voe, the murderess. But I never harmed your niece. She died of heart disease. It is she who was buried as Agatha Walden. I killed Caspar Voe. He meant to give me up to the law. I have been a bad woman, but I swear I never harmed Miss Bermyngham. I—I—Hyslop I have cheated you after all!"

Her painted face wore a sudden glow of triumph; then her features grew distorted and she fell to the floor.

When Lambton picked her up she was dead!

The body of the real Miss Bermyngham was disinterred, and deposited in the solemn Bermyngham vaults among her kindred.

Sir Lionel Charlton inherited the fortune which Lillias Voe had usurped, and very soon afterward the young baronet and Beatrix, his wife, and Lady Folliot, departed for a lengthened tour upon the Continent, to forget in travel the terrible experiences of the past few months.

But they did not go until Beatrix had testified her gratitude in various ways to all those who had befriended her, including faithful, grim Esther, the Trevor Farm housekeeper, and poor Jones, the farm-labourer, who had been rescued by his fellow-servants on their return from Bala.

Guarded by an adoring husband, cherished by Lady Folliot, who almost worshipped her, Beatrix's life is all sweetness and sunshine, all love and charity and good works.

THE END.

WINIFRED WYNNE;

OR,

THE GOLDSMITH'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Lost Coronet," "One Sparkle of Gold," etc.

CHAPTER LI.

The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when enshrouded in tears.

"My lord—my lord—indeed it is needless. Even if the marquis dies, it does not in the least change your position; you are still in the most imminent peril if you insist on returning to your native land," remonstrated the attendant, who had been in the service of Lord Clarence almost from his boyhood, and who assumed the privilege of his age and his long service in his honest and friendly attempts to

restrain his beloved master from the risk and impetuosity of his youthful passions.

"It matters not, Winter; my resolve is taken. I am not going to wander about like a Cain on the face of the earth any longer. If I am to be under the ban of an unjust judgment—the cruel persecution of an infamous enemy, then life is not worth having. Better death than life on such terms as those."

"But, my lord, patience—time works wonders. Truth will come to pass," again pleaded the attached domestic.

"Perhaps; but I will win the jade Fortune by conquering her caprices, not by being the slave to be tossed about by every blast of her ladyship's breath," replied the young nobleman, more gaily.

"And might I ask what it is that your lordship intends? What course will you pursue when you arrive in London?" asked Winter, gloomily.

"I shall beard the lion in his den. Go at once to the villain and demand of him the reparation he owes me," replied the young noble. "There is a bond hanging over me, but I think I shall bring me to a crisis by the course I am about to take. If I perish, I perish openly and honourably, not like a dog in a ditch."

"Alas! alas!" he said, sadly. "It is like your family, my dear lord, raw and impatient by nature; they can do all but bear nothing. Well, I will not leave you, whatever befalls. I may be of some good, and at any rate I cannot work you harm."

And he walked from the room, as if to hide the more effectually the strong emotion that was almost too overpowering for his decaying energies.

Lord Clarence gazed after him with a half-regretful smile.

"Poor old Winter, would that I were free to ease his fears," he resumed. "And yet I cannot tell that it would avail. He might think me even more rash than at present; to trust to such a vague and doubtful assurance."

As he spoke he drew from his dress a small packet tied with green ribbon, and with a seal that had evidently been of no small strength before it had been broken open.

It contained only a slip of paper, with a few gracefully penned lines, which bore the impress of a female pen.

"Let the Lord Clarence fear nothing. If he be so minded, he can take the bolder course of returning at once to his country, or if he hesitate to do so, he may count with surety on tidings that will remove all peril from his path. The writer is not free to say more, but the information may be trusted."

The young man gave a light laugh as he closed the packet that had not attracted glory in its composition.

"I have erred in disregarding one warning of ill," he muttered again. "Shall I be an equal idiot in believing the announcement of good? Well, if it comes from the same hand, it may assuredly be trusted. Fair Winifred Wynne, at least you have shown yourself true and self-sacrificing! There is little doubt—none—that you strove to save me at your own risk, and that even now you may be the prey of that miserable villain while I perchance would have averted the ill."

And the nobly born Lord Clarence fell into a fit of abstracted regret as to the possible sorrows of the once despised goldsmith's daughter. As a by-adversity, and it might be, the treachery of the highly-descended Sybil, had done their work in softening the feelings and rectifying the views of the spoiled son of rank and fortune.

However, for the moment it was needful rather to act than to dream over either past or future.

Lord Clarence knew that a vessel was going to sail from Havre on the following day but one for London, and as he was at the moment in a remote and secluded village of Normandy he considered that no time was to be lost in hastening to secure his passage.

It certainly needed some courage to cast himself once more in the very teeth of danger, to risk all that he had, with such effort, escaped as by a miracle.

But he was young, impetuous and weary of inaction, and moreover, a strange spell seemed to attach itself to the summons he had received.

Again and again he perused it, searching, as it were, for the slightest sign of the writer's identity. But not even a sign or initial could be define, and he was fain to trust to the instinct that indicated the source from which it came.

Forty-eight hours after its reception the young lord was on the sea, whose calm might either be a propitious omen or a treacherous snare, so far as navigation was concerned.

The passage occupied some three days and nights, even under those auspicious circumstances, but at length he landed on the well-known stairs which have witnessed so much joy and sorrow in the

embarkation and reception of travellers by their paths.

He had determined on his course. He would not wait for ignominious surprises or degrading arrests on his return to his country's shores.

He committed his baggage to Winter's care, and, after a few brief directions, in case of any misadventure to himself, he hastened away in the direction of that house which had worked him so much was, the house of the deceased Master Wynne, and, if it proved necessary, to the very shade of the hated and unscrupulous Adrian Meister, his relentless foe.

It was a bold game to play, but there are occasions when rashness is prudence, and Clarence was in truth weary of the bondage under which he had so long languished and felt that any active suffering was preferable to such endurance.

There was a somewhat deserted air about the once busy household of the goldsmith that jarred painfully on the young man's excited feelings.

The shop was closed, since no authority had as yet been received to act on the deceased citizen's behalf till the sealed paper was opened that was to decide Winifred's future fate.

But still the shutters of the habitable part of the dwelling had been recently opened, to judge from the dust-begrimed glass and desolate air of the blinds and curtains hanging within.

Clarence knocked once—twice—thrice at the door.

Then he pulled the handle of the heavy hall-ropes, and the clang that succeeded was decidedly favourable to a response from the dilapidated abodes of the inhabitants of the house.

It was quickly answered now by a grave and respectable-looking servant, as it seemed, to some substantial citizen, for the badge and livery he wore betokened such a position.

"The Mistress Winifred Wynne has returned to the dwelling, master," said the man, looking rather doubtfully at the dashing, though worn-looking figure before him. "But at this time she is busily engaged with my worthy master, who is in truth the representative of her deceased father."

And the man seemed to wait rather anxiously the effect of the announcement.

"Then I cannot see her, I presume, my good man. Would it be trespassing on your kind courtesy to take in my name, and inquire of the young mistress when she will find it convenient and suitable to receive me on a business that she wots of?"

"Well, I cannot tell. I might perhaps have the liberty, only I would not like any secret communication to the damsel," returned the old man, doubtfully. "It will be in open day and before my worthy master, if I do comply with your request. You understand that?"

"Yes, yes, certainly. I have no wish for any disgraceful mystery," returned the young nobleman, with a slight curl of the lip. "Say to the Mistress Winifred that Lord Clarence Seymour is waiting her leisure, and that if it pleases her to appoint another day for seeing him he will attend her at the time it may suit her convenience."

The man looked somewhat surprised at the announcement.

Even to his unphilosophical mind there was something imposing in the rank of the visitor and as he departed on his errand Lord Clarence half staid at the furtive glances which he cast behind him at the tilted visitor to the citizen's house.

A few moments sufficed for his absence, and on his return there was a marked change in his manner to the young nobleman.

"If your lordship will follow me," he said, respectfully, "I will conduct you to a room where you can await the conclusion of Mistress Winifred's business. She desired me to assure you that it would not be long before she would join you."

The young man was, in fact, taken into the very room where he had on former occasions waited for the appearance of the unfortunate goldsmith, and where he had become in the first instance most deeply interested in that humbly born and most tantalizing daughter.

Much had happened since then to change and mature his feelings.

Sybil de Courcy's open and mortifying interest and heartless dismissal of his fallen self, the separation from the gay and proud companions of his more prosperous days and the reflections that had come with the leisure and the solitude which had been forced upon him had all tended to crush down the rank weeds which had obscured his nobler qualities.

He was far more worthy of Winifred's love and sacrifices now than when he had first won her heart and created a never-dying interest in her soul.

The door opened after a brief space, and the young girl herself entered, followed by a grave and kind,

looking, elderly man, whose dress and bearing betokened him to be a wise, rich and substantial citizen; and who looked on his young companion with a paternal pride and interest that would scarcely have been greater had she been a child of his own. But truth to tell, the worthy Master Jenkins was a bachelor, and his guardianship of his friend's interests had certainly not included the care of the banished orphan.

Winifred bent gracefully to the young noble's greeting as she entered, but no symptom of agitation fluttered her countenance. There were too deep emotions in her mind for outward show.

"I am glad you have shown confidence in the vague warning that I sent you, my lord," she said, calmly. "In truth, what I have to communicate is of a nature that did not allow of more plainness in the wording of the notice. And now, my good friend, Master Jenkins, has supported me with his advice and his assistance, or I hardly dared to have fulfilled my task."

She looked appealingly at the citizen as she spoke and Master Jenkins responded to the appeal.

"It is true, my good lord, this gracious child, who merits a higher and better fate than any ducal in the land, has referred to me the perplexity in which she is placed between compassion and filial piety to the dead. And I can scarcely think so ill of you or any high-born and brave man as to doubt your grateful compliance with her prayer."

The young man had listened with respectful attention to the grave, measured and earnest address of the venerable man.

"You are not deceived, Master Jenkins, if that is your name," he said, with a dignified tone, and look which gave additional force to the words. "I already feel I owe much to the brave and unselfish exertions of Mistress Winifred Wynne, and unless my honour and duty forbid, she may rest assured that she can scarcely ask what I would not gladly grant. And, in any case, she may assuredly speak freely, and I should consider every word as uttered in confidence which nothing should induce me to betray."

A bright smile crossed the young girl's features, as if she had suddenly broken from under a dark cloud.

"That relieves me of one difficulty, at any rate," she said, gratefully. "Lord Clarence, you have been cruelly dealt by, and the odds are, if he did not really belong to my poor father's kin, yet enjoyed too much of his confidence for his own credit and peace of mind. But he too is dead and for my sake, if indeed you deem that I have done you any slight service, I would pray you to shield his memory from odium."

Lord Clarence had listened with his eyes as well as his ears.

"Mistress Winifred, I entreat you to speak freely," he said, in a subdued tone. "We assured you are safe in all you may confide to me, even if I do not see fit to carry out your wishes and ideas."

"I believe you from my heart," she said, quietly. "As indeed I will quickly prove to you, my lord. Look here!"

And she took from the hands of good Master Jenkins a parcel, tied carefully up with sealed string, which she quickly cut, and unwrapped the contents, that again were covered by a thin tissue paper.

Clarence Seymour's heart beat high at the sight.

There was small doubt in his excited mind as to the contents of the packet.

He guessed that the ban of his life was removed, that his honour was cleared from its crushing stain.

It was quickly verified as the diamond fingers of the girl calmly untied the tantalizing packet.

The last knot was unfastened, the glittering, long lost but familiar stones exposed to view.

It was the diamond necklace.

Uninjured, intact, a tangible proof of his innocence, dashed the priceless jewels.

Lord Clarence uttered a low cry.

It was too sudden, too overpowering for him to sustain the revelation of feeling.

"Good Heaven! can it be? Am I dreaming? Heaven be praised for its great mercies!"

And many, mist-like tears sprang in the young man's eyes and choked his utterance.

He could bear pain and suffering better than that unlooked-for relief.

"And where—how were they discovered?" he asked. "I can scarcely believe it even now."

Winifred smiled sadly.

"Thank Heaven it is true," she said, firmly. "As to the manner in which the necklace was discovered, it is enough to say that it was in the keeping of the unhappy and criminal Adrian Meister, and that the exposure of his crime cost him his life. He has gone to his last account, Lord Clarence," she added, with calm, gentle sweetness, "and we may leave him to the justice and mercy of his Creator. Will

you spare him—spare me the exposure of the miserable details? Will you permit the affair to rest in oblivion so far as the crime is concerned?"

The young noble looked doubtful.

"I demand no vengeance, I ask no vain and selfish atonement," he said. "But still, dear Mistress Winifred, you must see that, in a measure, my honour cannot be cleared without such a statement."

"No, no. I did not mean that," she replied, eagerly. "I would have it known by all that the evils have been discovered in a place hitherto unsearched. I would have it made clear that you are tainted from the base crime; but only spare the publication of the plot, the treachery that has been practiced. The father, the cousin of the criminal till live. It is to an accident that is due the discovery of the truth by the noble-minded cousin of whom I speak. And the memory of my own treacherous father, and my own name would be but too terribly mingled with the tale. It is for that I ask the boon, it is for that I plead to you, who have been so grossly, so wickedly injured."

Lord Clarence had not stopped the rapid course of her pleading words.

Perhaps his thoughts were far away, perhaps he had too sweet a pleasure in listening to her and watching the animated play of her features as she spoke.

But when the musical tone of her voice ceased she was not long left in suspense.

"Sweet Mistress Winifred," he said, in a low but earnest tone, "it was indeed a much more unreasonable boon than you could ask of me to ask. You have indeed earned the right to demand it as a claim rather than ask it as a favour. Only," he added, significantly, "only I too must make a prayer before I can altogether yield to your petition. And I will do it, albeit it is certainly somewhat strange and unusual in the presence of your friendly gathering, this worthy Master Jenkins. Winifred Wynne," he said, taking her hand in his with a respectful tenderness that she could scarcely resist without the appearance of prudish suspicion, "I have long, very long resisted the attraction that drew me towards you. I have crushed and smothered its impulses in a presumed and passing love for another, but in vain. And now, when I have been taught wisdom by adversity, when I have been saved by you from such terrible and hopeless perils, I can feel what has long been my true, deep instinct. I can never find one so worthy—one who will make my happiness and correct my errors as you will. I ask you, in all deliberate truth and respect, will you be my wife?"

The girl listened as if sweetest music had been tolling her senses in delicious visions. A soft flush came over her cheeks, and her downcast eyes trembled as the moist eyelashes strove to hide their expression from the bystander.

She understood him so well—she appreciated the delicacy and honour which had prompted the avowal before her worthy and responsible guardian. And the long, deep love she had cherished for him was but justified and strengthened by the fresh proof of his deserts.

At length she spoke:

"Lord Clarence, I feel it to the heart's core; but it cannot be. I am not wife for you. It would but work misery. You would repeat wedding the poor goldsmith's daughter, and then it would break my heart."

"Never, Winifred, never!" he returned, firmly. "If that is all your objection, it is naught in my eyes. I have fought too long with my love; I have seen all the difficulties that stood in the way of its indulgence. If such danger as you speak of ever existed it has passed away long since. I shall never change now. I do not say it in the heat of love nor gratitude, but in earnest and sober judgment and self-knowledge. Master Jenkins, you are experienced and past the heat of youthful passions. To you I appeal. Can you not see that I am true and calm in the feelings I express? Will you not help me in my pleading?"

It was strange to see the proud heir of a marquise—the descendant of a long line of titled ancestors, turning to a respectable citizen of London city to advocate his cause with a goldsmith's orphan.

But Timothy Jenkins had at least good sense and tact to appreciate the circumstances under which the appeal was made.

"I believe you to be in earnest, my lord, nay, I deem it very probable that you may fulfil all your promises, and that you will estimate to the full the value of the treasure you desire. But have you really thought of all you are risking, my lord? Do you comprehend that the will left by my late friend and compeer disinherited his daughter of the whole of his wealth, and that you are sousing a portionless bride in wedding Mistress Winifred?"

"I do—I do," returned Lord Clarence. "And she

is dearer to me for having suffered it so bravely rather than speak false vows to a man she despised. Oh! if I dare but also believe that she was strengthened in such firmness by any regard for my unworthy self."

"Well, my child, what say you?" said Master Jenkins, cheerily. "Methinks if my young lord has considered all that may intervene, if he knows the risk of poverty and of contempt which may come upon you, and still asks you with open eyes to be his wife, you may safely obey the bidding of your own heart in the matter."

Winifred trembled violently.

"If I dare," she whispered. "If I were but sure of your happiness, Lord Clarence, but if you were unhappy what should I do?" she smiled, sadly.

"If that is the only alarm, I will pledge my very life that it be baseless," he replied, joyfully. "I know full well my own heart. I have no fear—none. I have found my unstained name and my fair and fearless bride in one red-letter day. I ask no more of fortune for the nonce."

"But there may, perhaps, be something else still in store, my lord, though I speak in ignorance for the present," observed Master Jenkins, coolly. "If you will accompany us to the other apartment where the survivor, Master Fenton, and one other witness are awaiting us, we will open the last document left by my excellent friend, Master Wynne, and see the final arrangement that remains for his executors and trustees to make."

And the citizens led the way from the sitting-room to that which had been formerly used as the more common apartment of the family, followed by the newly betrothed pair, with a flutter of mingled happiness and agitation and bewilderment that they found it difficult to repress beneath the exterior of calmness and dignity which became the occasion.

But when they arrived in the familiar room and perceived the dry, formal scrivener and his clerk, with another person, who was a stranger even to Winifred, the stronger feeling of anxiety and excitement smothered for a moment all else.

"Master Fenton, I delivered to you but now the packet left by the deceased Master Wynne," said Timothy Jenkins, solemnly. "It was, as you can testify, intact since the hour when it was signed and sealed in your presence and mine; you perceive that to be the case, I doubt not?"

"Certainly," returned the scrivener, "such was the case, Master Jenkins, and it now being the time appointed, we will proceed to open and examine its contents before these assembled witnesses."

And as he pronounced the words he broke the seals that had secured the document, and drawing from it the paper he began to read:

"I, Gervase Wynne, having long and anxiously considered the will and testament that I made of my property, do hereby add the following directions: Should my daughter Winifred continue in her refusal to espouse Adrian Maister according to my desire and command, and still abstain from forming any other marriage in the interval before this is opened, I hereby desire that, on condition that the husband she may choose shall be in ignorance of her inheritance and freely court and ask her hand before the opening of this packet, I do give my consent to such a marriage and give and bequeath to my said daughter the whole residue of my wealth and estate beyond what I devised to Adrian Maister in compensation for his loss of his expected bride. But should no such betrothal have taken place on the conditions I have mentioned, then I give to my said daughter Winifred the income of such property for her life, and after her death it shall be used for the building and endowment of an hospital for the diseased and destitute citizens of London who shall have carried on the same craft as myself and to be under the management of the trustees whom I have named in the paper attached to this document."

"Signed—Gervase Wynne."

There was a silence for some moments, then Master Jenkins turned to the newly-betrothed pair with a grave smile.

"I give you joy, my good lord, and you, too, my little ward. At least your fears of poverty are at an end," he said, with a quiet earnestness that scarcely seemed to belong to his grave demeanour.

"Any fears that I should seem to court my bride for her wealth are relieved," said Lord Clarence, gaily. "You, my good friends, can testify that it was as a portionless maiden that I earnestly and humbly wooed Winifred to give me herself as the greatest treasure she could bestow."

Winifred was silent.

She felt too deeply moved for speech and she glided away to the well-remembered chamber where she had suffered so much in her early girlhood and there, kneeling at the couch where she had sent up such despairing petitions to Him who is a father to the fatherless, she poured out her whole soul in

thanksgiving for the wondrous deliverance and mercy she had received in her greatest straits.

"Let her be, let her be," was Master Jenkins's advice to the anxious lover. "It is joy that does not kill; but it is a fulness that needs vent. I am the more thankful, my good lord, to find that my old comrade, Gervase Wynne, was not so utterly dazed by that villain, who, I doubt not, met his death by something of the same drug that finished his own career."

Lord Clarence started.

"What, by poison?" he said. "Does she—does his daughter suspect it, Master Jenkins?"

"Why, no, thank Heaven," said the citizen, "she is spared that grief. But there is more than reason to suspect that on the night when you, my lord, were supposed to have abstracted the jewels Gervase Wynne was drugged. He was a man of such abstemious ways that I believe not in his drinking to excess, and the symptoms of his illness were such as would be caused by a moderate dose of the drug in question, so far as I can understand from the doctors. But he is gone to his account, and it is not for us mortals to judge of the dead, whatever we may do of the living."

And Timothy Jenkins bowed his gray head in reverent acknowledgment of the Power to whom vengeance belongeth.

CHAPTER LII.

Little remains to be told of the future fate of those who were connected with the shattered fortunes of the goldsmith's daughter.

The wedding of the Margate of Hauteville and Winifred Wynne was celebrated as soon as the demands of the older brother and the delay it unavoidably occasioned would permit, and the queen herself could have gazed with pride on her presence in the royal chapel of Whitehall Chapel had not the doddering health of her husband saddened her feelings and occupied her time too entirely for such a festivity.

But the bride was not only the neekless that had well-nigh caused her husband's ruin and even death but a cluster of precious stones on her fair brow that the gracious hand of her royal mistress had presented to her on the eve of her wedding-day.

And when Anne's hour of sorrow came and she was left a mourning widow, it was Winifred, Marchioness of Hauteville, who could soothe her grief most sweetly, and soften the gloom which hung over her spirit by her gentle tact and sympathy, and on her frequent companionship the queen hung to the very last of her own life.

Viola married Cecil Vernon so soon as the boon which Winifred had obtained for them was fully confirmed by legal grant.

But there was little happiness in their union; Cecil's passing passion for the gay and sprightly beauty vanished even before she became his wife, and when he became acquainted with the sequel of Winifred Wynne's disinheritance and banishment, indifference towards his fair but frivolous bride deepened into well-nigh an aversion that defied concealment.

And she, on her part, consoled herself by extravagant enjoyments and the admiration which her beauty and vivacity commended in the gay world.

Some few and feverish years of this wretched existence passed on, and then came its too certain end.

Cecil at last could no longer ignore the extent of the injuries that were inflicted on him by his thoughtless and vain wife where an admirer of no ordinary rank was in the question.

A duel was the result, in which the outraged husband fell a victim, and Viola was left in desolate and hopeless remorse, abandoned by her friends and reproached by the mother to whose training was due much of her errors and her misery.

But Winifred, who had been despised by her in her own reverses, and who had shunned the heartless coquette when they in after days were cast in the same circles, flew to her side now in pitying mercy.

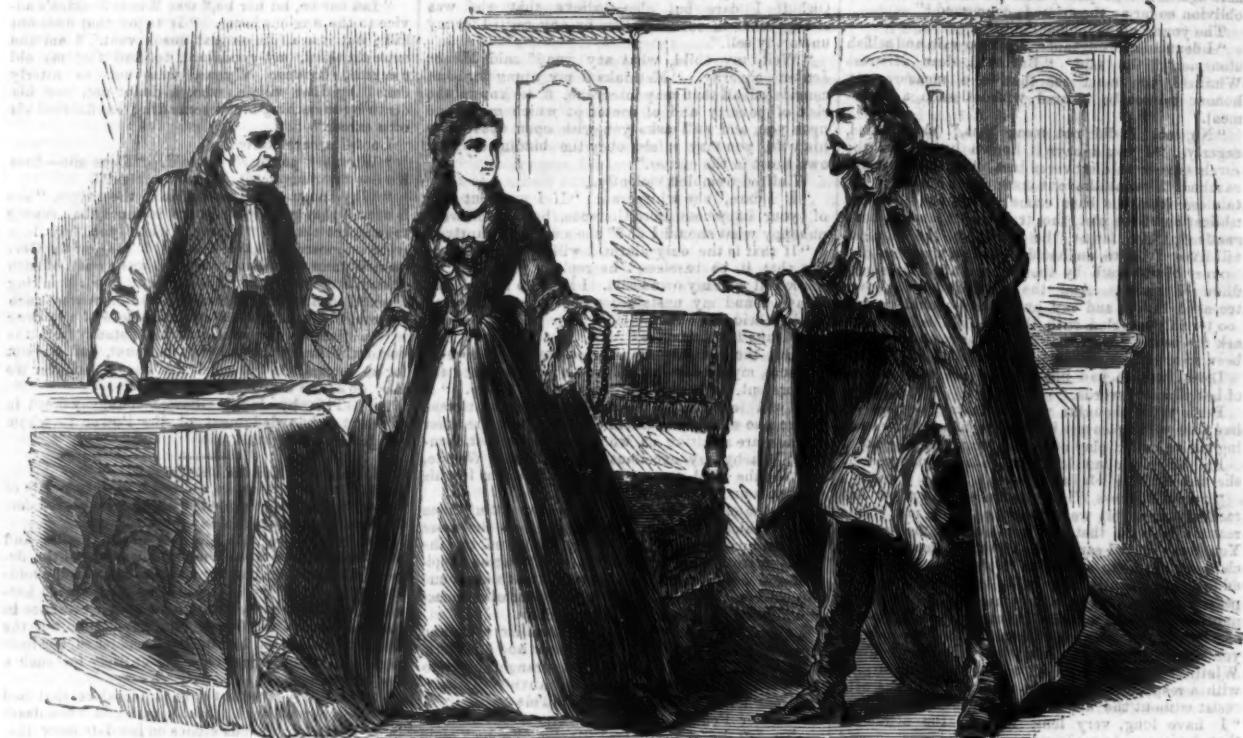
It was she who led Viola to more hopeful penitence from despairing remorse, and who after her death took charge of the little orphan girl who was thus left alone in the world.

"Teach her to be like yourself, and all unlike her wretched mother," were Viola's last words.

And to judge from an entry of the marriage of "George Clarence, Lord Seymour, to Blanche, daughter of Sir Cecil Vernon, deceased," the little orphan became a real as well as adopted daughter to Winifred in after years.

It was a remarkable conclusion to the episode of the early friendship of two so unlike in birth and qualities and training.

But the history of this country well illustrates the romances which perhaps form the real foundation of



[THE NECKLACE FOUND.]

their country's greatness when compared with the strict and limited rules that govern the mingling of orders in other lands.

The early adversity, the severe lessons, the unlooked-for wealth that had attended the youth of Winifred Wynne were decidedly the most sure and certain preparation for the rank and luxury and prestige which marked the womanhood and old age of Winifred, Marchioness of Hauteville.

And many an hour was spent in her nursery, where Dorcas was installed as chief superintendent, by the once much-tried mistress and maid in discussing the past and tracing its influence on the present.

And Dorcas would many a time conclude by the remark:

"Ah, my lady, the dear children may grow up as pretty as yourself and as brave as my lord. But they can never know what has made you both so noble and true. They can never come up to you in strength and courage, my lady, because they never had to go through so much for the sake of other folks. Still, they are dear little things, and I'm sure they'll be a comfort and credit to you, as well as poor little Miss Blanche, who requires more than any of them, one may say, being an orphan and no great things to speak of from her mother if all I hear be true."

And Winifred would sit down and reflect on her own dear mother and all she owed to her wise and gentle training, and redouble her efforts and cares of her darlings, as the fruits of her musing.

It was some two years after her wedding, and neither Clarence nor his wife had received any tidings of Sybil de Courcy, save from a casual source, which spoke of her departure from the Court of St. Germain-en-Laye, and her expected marriage with an Italian prince, whose rank, combined with her riches, might be sufficient to afford every chance of happiness to the proud and passionate heiress.

There were moments indeed when her name was mentioned between the happy pair.

And Clarence would gravely confess the whole extent of his infatuation for the fair foreigner.

"Do you know, my Winifred," he said, one day, when a casual mention in a letter he had received renewed the memory of the absent Sybil, "I believe it was your utter superiority to her in the very qualities in which you might resemble each other that really won my heart. Hers was the rich gilding, yours the true gold. And, thank Heaven I discovered the actual and precious worth of her whom I tried to ignore ere it was too late."

Winifred gave a faint smile of tenderness and somewhat sad memory, when her reply was inter-

rupted by the entrance of a servant bearing a packet on a salver to his lady, who eagerly regarded and broke open the seal.

It contained a long written sheet and a small box, that was also carefully secured by a ribbon and seal.

Winifred did not recognize the handwriting on either direction, but on glancing at the close of the sheet she read the name of her of whom they had been speaking.

It was signed:

"SYBIL DE COLOMNA,
"Née de COURCY."

Winifred drew a long breath ere she began the letter.

She knew that it must touch on the painful past, and perhaps give her tidings which it would sorely wound her to learn. But she caught Clarence's gaze fixed steadily upon her, and, gathering courage from its anxious expression, she began to read.

"Winifred," it ran, "you have been a happy wife and mother for many long years, and now, as ever, I have never been able to think of you without envy, and, it may be, malice in my heart. Yet I owe to you life, though it was perhaps a doubtful boon, and yet when you risked your safety for my rescue it was done in free and generous self-sacrifice."

"And I—how have I repaid you? Winifred, I told you once that the very danger from which you rescued me was caused by my jealousy at Clarence Seymour's attention to your grace and beauty when he was by my side, and an evil spirit, a very fiend, came ere long to strengthen all the fears and the anger and the malice which possessed me, and tempted me by promises that if I would aid him in his plans he would take care that you should never cross my path where Clarence was concerned. And I—I believed him and yielded. I was too passionate and yet too weak to resist. He asked one favour that I can now but too well comprehend. He asked me to obtain for a brief space the ring that your present husband always wore."

"It were needless to say how I performed the promise. By a mingling of jest and earnest, of pleading and threats, I induced Lord Clarence to let me look especially at this sacredly-guarded treasure. I only gave it to the miserable plotter for one day, but it sufficed to work the evil. The ring that served as such convincing proof of his guilt was but a facsimile of the one he wore, and had Lord Clarence been less confiding or less overcome by his situation he could certainly have disproved that part of the evidence against him. Now, Winifred, I have confessed all that I did of active evil and treachery for

the sake of winning from you the only man I ever loved. It only remains for me to mourn over the heartless selfishness that induced me to cast away the prize I had won and to shrink from the risk of hardship and disgrace. I am justly punished, and you are reaping the reward of your noble deeds in the happiness you have won. I am wretched, ill, dying—the neglected wife of a man I detest, and who has spent the fortune in his escapades and pleasures which I feared to trust to one who was under an unjust cloud of shame and suffering. But before I die I wish to make this reparation to him and to you. Bid Clarence forgive me if only for your sake; and tell him when he looks at the ring that I now send back to its rightful owner he must remember the trouble from which you delivered him and try to repay the debt he owes you. Farewell! May Heaven bless you, Winifred, you and yours! Pray for your unhappy friend, even when she shall be no more."

Tears flowed down Winifred's cheeks as she perused these lines.

"Poor Sybil," she said, "hers was after all a noble nature, even if misled by passion and indulgence. Clarence, dearest, here is then the last mystery removed from the past and the lost heirloom at length restored to you and your descendants."

"Yes, and, like all the good I enjoy, it is owing to you, my Winifred," he said, with solemn tenderness. "May I never cease to value and cherish my treasure as she deserves."

Only one person who was most instrumental in the unravelling of the tangled web wrought by Adrian Meister's villainy remain unmentioned. Gretchen Vamburt not only enjoyed the fortune that had so singularly descended to her from her miser relative, but she became the heir-at-law of the portion of Gertrude Wynne's wealth which had been bequeathed to her Cousin Adrian.

Thus richly dowered, she gave her hand and her true woman's heart to the man she had chosen when a comparatively penniless maiden.

And he justified her troth and constancy. Thanks to his own talents and probity and aided by the wealth which gave him leisure to use his powers, he rapidly rose in his native country to some of the first offices of the state, and made for himself a name which descended to his posterity with pride and honour.

And thus Gretchen's happiness was another sweet drop in the full cup of Winifred, the Goldsmith's Daughter.

THE END.



[THE MURDERER AND HIS VICTIM.]

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

BY CHARLES GARVICE,

AUTHOR OF

"Only Country Love," "The Gipsy Peer," "Fickle Fortune," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXX.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive.

ARM-IN-ARM Captain Howard Murpoint and Leicester Dodson descended the cliff.

The heart of the latter was beating fast with the joy born of hope.

In a few minutes he should be near his sweet Violet; should perhaps clasp her in his arms—for might she not in the excitement of the moment be won to confess that she returned him love for love?

"Come along!" he said. "Every moment—"
"Gently!" replied the captain, cheerily. "Remember this path is narrow and somewhat dangerous: a false step and over we should be."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Leicester, who felt fit for any mad thing. "I could run down it blindfold."

Thus exhorted, the captain quickened his pace.

While going passed through the village Leicester nodded towards the "Blue Lion."

"All quiet now," he said. "As I passed this evening they were just coming out. By the way, your old servant still remains at Penriddle; he was drunk as usual to-night, and noisy."

"Oh, he is quiet now—I daresay asleep," said the captain, with a sardonic grin in the darkness.

"Yes, I suppose so," said Leicester. "All the village is asleep. It is getting late. Do you think that Viol—Miss Mildmay will have waited so long?"

"What do you think?" asked the captain. "If she should have gone home, it is not much out of your way."

"None at all," said Leicester, eagerly. "All ways are my way to-night."

And he commenced climbing the hill at a terrific pace.

Suddenly he stopped.

"What is the matter?" asked the captain, who was close behind him.

"I fancied—yes, there it is again," said Leicester, "that I saw a shooting-star. Too large for a star too, I have seen it before to-night, and, what is strange, I have always noticed that it appears on the

same night as the ghost. It's a signal, I really believe, but of what I don't know."

"Oh, no; I think not," said the captain, who knew what the star meant well enough. "I take it to be a gleam of phosphorescent light on the sea."

"No matter," said Leicester, curtly. "At least, for the present. I have set myself a task in regard to that ghost, and anything mysterious I am ready to connect with it."

"I'll join you in ghost hunting if you will allow me," said the captain.

Leicester made some rejoinder, and he walked on until the chapel came in sight.

"Strange," mused Leicester. "An hour ago I was longing for Africa; now I would not exchange England for ten undiscovered worlds."

"The wind shifts rapidly," said the captain, with his soft, treacherous laugh, "and the weathercock obeys it with all cheerfulness."

Leicester was too happy to resent the sneer, and the next moment they entered the chapel.

"Dark as pitch," he said. "Here is the torch. I do not see—where are you?" he broke off to ask, for the captain had suddenly left his side.

"Here," said the captain.

Leicester turned, but before he could utter another word he felt his arms pinned to his sides, and a bandage thrown over his mouth.

He struggled hard and furiously to free his arms and mouth, but his unseen assailants were four to one, and after a few moments he gave up the ineffectual resistance and knelt, for he had been forced on to his knees at last, nevertheless glaring impotently round him.

He could see dark figures flitting about, but a dead silence reigned.

It was broken at last by a voice which he knew well.

It was Job's.

"Maester Leicester, it be of no use to struggle agen too many. Do you give in quietly?"

Leicester thought a moment, then nodded, pointing to the gag.

"If we take it off will 'e promise not to shout?" asked Job.

Again Leicester hesitated, and again made a motion in the affirmative.

"Take it off; he'll not break his word," said Job, and some one from behind slipped off the gag.

"Now, Maester Leicester," said Job, "we've got your word. Mind ye, you're not to speak till ye get permission."

Leicester nodded.

"Do you know me?" asked Job.

"I do," said Leicester. "You are Job, the carrier and a scoundrel!"

"Hard words break no bones and can't ruffle me, Maester Leicester," said Job, coolly. "What's more, there ain't time for 'em now. I didn't take the gag off for that neither. I would ask you a question."

"Another question first," said Leicester, struggling inwardly for calm, and determined to remain as cool as possible. "Why am I decoyed here and treated thus?"

"For a good reason, be sure," said Job. "Maester Leicester, you be a clever gentleman, a scholar and so on, and you knows too much for some on us."

"Go on," said Leicester, with suppressed passion.

"You've been prying about too much lately, prying into what don't concern you, and you've discovered summat as you shouldn't a knowed anything of. Don't I speak the truth?"

"I have discovered nothing," said Leicester. "But, trust me, I will unmask the villain who lured me here and the scoundrels in his pay."

There was a threatening movement behind him, but Leicester's courage did not flinch.

Job shook his head.

"D'ye mean to threaten us, Maester Leicester?" he said. "I'm sorry for it. I'd hoped we'd come to some terms. Suppose you discovered this little game—and you've done it for a certainty—I puts it to you as a gentleman, what harm can it do to you and yours? Do it matter to you gentlefolk if a cask o' wine and a bundle o' cigars is run in now and then without the Customs knowing it?"

"Ah!" said Leicester, the whole secret breaking in upon him. "That's the villany, is it? So you honest fishermen are a parcel of thieves, with a scoundrel at your head! That's the key to the mystery, is it? What! and you dare to ask me to connive at your rascality! Job, you know me better. If that knife I see at your belt were at my throat you'd get the same answer! If I live through the night I'll drag you to justice, and you know it!"

"Don't anger us!" said Job, hoarsely. "Don't I put it fairly? What does it concern you? Why can't you take the oath like a gentleman to keep your tongue in your teeth and your eyes shut? Not a soul will lay a hand on you and you may go free as the air. Say that, Maester Leicester, and you're a free man."

"Never!" said Leicester. "You waste time and words: you should know me better. If there are any others round me who can hear me, they too should know me better than to hope I would make a paltry villain of myself even to save myself from their

trickery. I repeat it, if I live through to-night I will bring you to justice, Job, and all your gang."

"Bah! Waste of time indeed," said a smooth voice behind Job.

"You still there?" said Leicester. "I know you for a villain when I first saw your vile face and heard your false voice. You triumph to-night, Captain Murpoint, if that is your name; but have a care: a rogue's day is a short one. The reckoning will come, if there is a Heaven above; and that there is a power which can protect the innocent from your snares I know and trust, or I should be tempted to break my word and—You triumph to-night, but you will not always do so. Mark the mood of it. I know you now for what you are! You think to get me out of the way that you may carry out your plot with safety. My dear fellow, you are mistaken. Such rogues as you do not succeed. Let that bring consolation. The gallows lies in your path, and every little such paltry triumph as this draws you more swiftly down to it."

"Pah!" said Leicester, contemptuously. "Fine words, boys. Better words no more time. The fool is raving mad with fear, and doesn't know what he says."

"Not so mad that he will have me try at your throat, you cur?" said Leicester, with quiet determination.

And with a significant look he sprung at the spot from whence the captain's voice proceeded.

But a dozen hands were upon him, he was dragged to the ground, and the law, scornful laugh of the successful schemer smothered him.

"Take him off; it's all of me now," said Job, grimly.

"Yes, take him off," echoed the captain. "Slip on the gag and truss him more to the first fellow's honour, or you'll hear the sound of his voice yelling like a frightened scoundrel."

Two or three hands slipped the gag over the captive's mouth, and he was trussed on two pairs of stout shoulders.

"Good night," said the captain. "I leave you in good hands, Mr. Leicester Dodson. They'll take care of you. Good night. I will make your excuse to the person whom you should have met, and, with another mocking grin, the captain, having waited until the crowd of figures were lost in the gloom, turned on his heel and walked rapidly away.

So quietly had the capture and removal of Leicester Dodson been effected that not a dog about the Park had been roused, and the captain, standing on the lawn, waited until he saw the signal which announced the success of the under taking, then entered the house and stepped quietly upstairs.

Not so quietly but that a pair of ears heard him. As he passed Violet's door it opened and Violet stepped across the threshold.

The lamp in the room within threw a sickly glare on her and made her face appear paler than it was.

Yet there seemed a gleam of hope in her eyes and her voice was stirred by the same feeling as she said, with forced calm:

"You have been very long."

The captain glanced aside and heaved a sigh.

"I had hoped that you would not have waited," he said.

Violet knew by his words that he had been unsuccessful in his mission of peace, and a grayer tint came over her face.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

"You have seen him?" she said, in a low, strained voice.

The captain inclined his head.

"Yes," he said, "I have seen Mr. Leicester."

"And you gave him the message? Oh, tell me, please!" and she clasped her hands with a gesture of despair.

"I know not how to tell you," said the captain, brokenly. "At least I can assure you this, that Mr. Dodson is not worth another thought of yours. You, and I also, are utterly mistaken in him. He is neither generous, nor forgiving."

Violet interrupted by a gesture.

"Will you tell me what he said?"

"When I left you," said the captain, still with averted face, as if reluctant to tell her what he knew must mortally and pain her, "when I left you I walked up to the Cedars, hoping to find him at home, but a servant told me he had gone for his walk. I went down to the village and waited there for some time, and at last looked for him on the beach. I could not find him there, and, as I was determined not to return to you until I had seen him, I made my way back to the village and waited by the cliff road."

He paused a moment to snuff the candle and to glance at her face.

He could see she was listening attentively, and he wished her to do so.

"I waited some time and then walked up the hill.

There I met him, and—and—oh, that I could spare you the indignity of this moment!—and gave him your message. At first he treated me with a specimen of his incredulity. He was suspicious of I know not what, and it was not until I took your flower and put it in his hand that he considered I had any authority to speak to him concerning you."

"He took the flower?" said Violet, faintly.

The captain inclined his head.

"Yes; he thrust it in his coat with a cynical, mocking laugh. 'Tall her,' said he, 'that I will keep her flower hat will have none of her love.—You would have me tell you,' he added, hurriedly, as Violet staggered slightly and flushed a hot crimson of shame and indignation.

"I did not give you any such message," she burst forth, with a wall of wounded pride.

"Nor did I say a word which should call forth such an insult," replied the captain. "Do not think of it. He was mad at the time, I fully believe—Mad, raving mad. What could I say or do when he uttered that insult? I turned and left him. I could have felled him to the ground, but my mission was one of peace."

"And he said no more?" asked Violet, huskily.

"No more," said the captain. "I watched him as he went down the street and past the inn. The men were coming out and I feared that perhaps, in his mad, ill-tempered state, he should be so indiscreet as to run against my man, Starling, for he was among the group. But Mr. Dodson passed on, and the men dispersed. Starting alone going in the direction of the cliff."

He paused to let his words, slowly spoken, carry their full weight and make their due impression, then continued:

"Then I came on home, but I could not find heart to see you. I determined to wait until you had gone to bed; you would be stronger in the morning to bear the insult."

He paused again.

"With that resolve I paced up and down the lane. I must confess with the hope that Mr. Dodson would return and, his ill-temper vented, give me a more satisfactory answer to your gentle, noble message. But he has not returned—at least by that road; he may have ascended to the Cedars by the lower road—and at last, thinking you must by this time have retired to rest, I ventured to come in."

There was a silence, unnatural and ghostly in its intensity, then Violet spoke.

Her voice was heavy and weary, but there was a ring of true dignity in it such as would have filled a less base nature than the captain's with pity and reverence.

"I thank you," she said. "I thank you from my heart. I did what I thought right, and though it has won me nothing but insult I think it right still. Mr. Leicester Dodson misunderstood and misjudged me. He said that I had wronged and injured him. I sent to say that neither in thought nor deed had I intended him harm. So far I am right, the rest let him be answerable for."

"Nobly spoken!" exclaimed the captain, in a voice apparently choked with emotion. "Nobly spoken. Yours is a proud nature, worthy the daughter of my old friend John Mildmay. Good night! You are weary to death. Good night."

He took her hand and bowed over it, and, with a gesture as if he were swallowing tears hurriedly walked away towards his own room.

CHAPTER XXXI.

'Tis a vile thing to die
When man is unprepared and look not for it.

We had best draw a veil over the remainder of that night so far as Violet's feelings are concerned.

Nothing, says a poet, is more terrible than a woman scorned.

She had been insulted by the man she loved, and the insult rankled and festered at her heart and turned the hours of the night into torture well nigh unendurable.

The captain, on the contrary, slept the sleep of the innocent and just.

He did not even dream of a white, mangled face lying on the jagged rocks.

In the morning he came down, dressed with his usual care, smiling and serene.

Mrs. Mildmay had not succeeded in rousing Violet, so she made excuse for her.

"I think she has not been well lately, and I fancy a change would do her good," said the simple lady.

"Perhaps it would be as well for us to go up to town."

"Yes," said the captain, "I should propose it. I hear the Lucklands intend returning to London. May I thank you for a little more tongue?"

And he proceeded with his breakfast in the most comfortable and languid manner.

Presently Violet made her appearance. She was very white, and, as Mrs. Mildmay had said, not at all the thing.

She kissed her aunt, shook hands with Captain Murpoint, and glided to her seat.

The captain opened the newspaper and while pretending to read it glanced over the top and scanned Violet's face.

Mrs. Mildmay chatted in her usual commonplace way, and the breakfast threatened to go off as quietly and uneventfully as usual.

But suddenly the sound of many voices broke the monotony, and the captain, looking through the window saw a small crowd approaching up the lane.

"Quite a commotion," he said, with a smile. "Is this a saint's day, and are they coming to ask alms?"

"No," said Mrs. Mildmay. "What are they?"

Violet glanced out of the window languidly, and turned to the table again.

"They seem to be coming to the house," said the captain, putting up his eye-glass. "Yes, here they are, going round to the back entrance."

"What can they want?" mused Mrs. Mildmay.

"I cannot conjecture," said the captain, sipping his coffee.

Presently, after the lapse of a few moments, the footman entered.

"You are wanted, sir," he said, addressing the captain.

"To?" said the captain.

"You, sir," said the man.

"Very well," said the captain, briefly. "I will come now."

So he folded the paper, sipped his coffee, and, murmuring, placidly, "I wonder what they want," rose and left the room.

"I wonder what it can be," said Mrs. Mildmay. "Have you any idea, Violet?"

"No, aunt," said Violet, languidly. "They have come on business, perhaps."

After a few minutes the captain reentered. His face was very grave, almost somber.

Mrs. Mildmay looking at it felt a vague alarm.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"No—not much," hesitated the captain, glancing at Violet. "An accident has happened."

"An accident!" repeated Violet, looking up with her white face. "To whom?"

"To—no—no one in particular—that is to say, no one for whom you care."

"To whom, then?" asked Mrs. Mildmay.

The captain closed the door softly, and came up to the table.

"To my man Starling," he said, gravely. "He has fallen over the cliff."

"Fallen over the cliff!" echoed Mrs. Mildmay.

"How dreadful!"

"Is it not?" he exclaimed. "Terrible! Poor fellow! I saw him last night," and here he glanced at Violet.

"And he has fallen over?" exclaimed Mrs. Mildmay. "And where did they find him?"

"That I have scarcely learned," said the captain.

"It seems that they have taken the body to the coastguard station and that they require me to identify it."

"You will go at once?" said Mrs. Mildmay.

"At once," he said, and rang the bell for his hat.

Violet sat quite silent, her head leaning upon her hand.

The captain gravely sipped his coffee until his hat came; then he put it on, and prepared to accompany the men.

"There is great excitement," he said. "This sort of man rash to a conclusion directly."

"What conclusion have they rushed to?" asked Mrs. Mildmay.

"They think he met his death by foul play," replied the captain. "But," he added, quickly, "that is only ignorant fishermen's supposition. I will go down to the coastguard station and see him," and he left the room.

Outside the house was a small knot of men.

The captain went out to them and touched his hat.

"Which is the nearest way?" he asked.

A dozen voices answered him; and, thus guided and accompanied, he set off.

In silence, followed by the crowd, he made his way to the coastguard station.

The door was closed, and another small crowd surrounded them.

The captain knocked, and a coastguardsman opened the door, admitted him, and closed it upon the crowd.

"Good morning, captain," he said, touching his hat; "a sad affair this."

"Very," said the captain. "Where is the poor fellow?"

"In here," said the coastguard, and led the way to an inner room.

Upon a table lay stretched out the mangled form of the escaped convict, Tom Starling. The captain approached and uncovered his head. "Dreadful!" he said, turning away. "Dreadful!" You recognize him?" asked the coastguard. "Oh, yes," replied the captain. "It is Starling, my old servant. I recognised him at once."

The coastguard nodded, and then asked the captain, "Where did you find him?"

"Under the cliff—about a quarter of a mile before you come to the guard-box," said the captain.

"He fell over, of course?" said the captain.

The coastguard remained silent and stared down at the body gravely.

"You have no doubt of that?" pursued the captain.

"Can't say, sir," replied the man, with a strange shake of the head. "Can't say. Ben Bolt found him."

"Where is Ben Bolt?" asked the captain.

The coastguard opened a side door and called the man by his name.

A short, weather-beaten figure entered, and, seeing the captain, touched his hat.

"The captain wants to know where you found this unfortunate body, Ben," said the man.

"On the rocks below the cliff," replied the man.

"Ah," said the captain, "just where the path is narrowest. The poor fellow fell over, no doubt. I saw him last night, and he was very intoxicated."

The two coastguards exchanged glances.

"What course do you intend taking?" asked the captain.

"We've telegraphed to the inspector of police at Tenby," said the coastguard. "He'll be over here directly, and we can tell him what we know and give the things we've found."

"What things?" inquired the captain.

The two men exchanged glances again, and, after a few moments of hesitation, the head coastguard drew near the captain and whispered:

"It's a mysterious business, captain; we've found more than the body."

"What do you mean?" asked the captain.

"Fetch 'em here, Ben," said the man, and Ben Bolt, touching his hat, went to a cupboard, from which he brought a light felt hat and a withered lily.

"There!" said the head coastguard.

"Well," said the captain. "This is his hat, is it not?"

"No," said Ben Bolt, "it hasn't and everybody knows it. There he is, and he pointed to the hat which lay beside the body. "There he is, hat, which he always used to wear. This man was found near him—close beside him, as you may say, just as if it had fallen off with him."

"And the flower?" asked the captain.

"Was tight in his hand—tight as if a vice held it," replied Ben Bolt.

"Let me see the hat," said the captain.

The coastguard handed the hat and the captain examined it.

"I have seen this hat before," said the captain, looking at it with a puzzled air. "I am sure I have seen it before. Ah!" he exclaimed, suddenly.

"What's the matter?" inquired the coastguard.

"Nothing," said the captain, who seemed visibly affected.

"I know what's took you so sudden-like," said the coastguard. "You caught sight of these two letters," and he turned up the hat and pointed to "L. D.", which were marked in the inside rim.

The captain nodded gravely.

"I confess it," he said. "I did see them."

"So did we," said the coastguard, "and so we telegraphed to Tenby at once."

"Let me look at that flower," said the captain, suddenly.

Ben Bolt handed him the broken and withered lily. The captain looked at it for a moment with deep scrutiny, then turned pale.

The two men exchanged glances.

"You've seen that flower before?" said the coastguard.

"I have—that is, I cannot say," said the captain, hurriedly. "Better look them up and show them to the inspector."

The coastguard nodded.

"That's it," he said, "let him take all the trouble; it ain't no business of mine, and I ain't a goin' to make it any. I'm here to look after smugglers, not this sort of business."

The captain nodded.

The captain nodded.

"I see," he said, gravely. "It is a serious and a terrible thing."

And he turned to leave the station.

Presently he turned back again suddenly.

"Has Mr. Leicester Dodson been to identify the body?" he asked.

The two men looked at each other.

"No, he haven't," said the coastguard.

And the captain, after a moment's pause, left the station and walked down the cliffs, with the small crowd at his heels again.

Very slowly he walked home.

When he came to the lawn wicket he hesitated a moment and turned back again.

He ascended the path leading to the Odium and rang the bell at the lodge.

The lodge-keeper came out to him.

"Is Mr. Dodson at home?" he asked.

"I believe he is, sir," said the man, opening the gates.

The captain passed through and reached the house.

A footman ushered him into the drawing-room.

"Will you tell Mr. Dodson I wish to see him?" he asked.

"And if you see Mr. Leicester, say that I am here," he added.

The man bowed and left the room.

Presently Mrs. Dodson entered.

"Oh, good morning, captain," she said, holding out her hand. "Neither Mr. Dodson is or any son at home. Mr. Dodson has gone to London with Mr. Lennox, and Leicester I have not seen yet."

"Oh, it is of no consequence," said the captain.

"I stepped upon the cliff, and an accident which has occurred in the village."

"An accident? I am sorry for that! What is it?"

"A man fell over the cliff," said the captain.

"One of the fishermen?" asked Mrs. Dodson.

"No," said the captain, rising, and he told her who it was.

"She looked very much shocked, but certainly displayed no extraordinary feminine alarm, and the captain, being convinced that neither Mr. Dodson nor Leicester was at home, took his leave."

When he entered the breakfast room at the Park he did not notice, or pretended that he did not notice Violet, who was sitting at the window half-hidden by the curtain, but, advancing to Mrs. Mildmay, he said, in a tone of grave concern:

"It is as I feared, my dear madam. The man is Starling, my late valet."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Mildmay.

"And he was found lying on the rocks below the cliff. He had suddenly fallen over or been thrown over."

"Thrown over!" repeated Mrs. Mildmay, with a look of horror. "Oh, who could be guilty of such a horrible crime?"

"I do not know—I cannot say," said the captain, who seemed much agitated. "Has Mr. Leicester Dodson been here this morning?"

"No," said Mrs. Mildmay. "Did you expect him?"

"Oh, no," said the captain. "I should like to see him; indeed, I went up to the Odium hoping to see him, but I could not find either him or Mr. Dodson at home."

"Why did you want to see him?" asked the simple lady.

"I should have liked him to see the body, and to ask him a few questions," said the captain, who knew that the white-mustached figure in the window-seat was listening attentively.

"But why?" asked Mrs. Mildmay. "You identified the poor fellow sufficiently, I should think, and what questions could you have to ask?"

The captain drew nearer, with an expression of troubled perplexity.

Suddenly he laid his hand upon Mrs. Mildmay's arm, and, with a grave look, said:

"I had better tell you, I had better tell you, so that you may be on your guard and keep the news from Violet. I have seen the man, and something else; a hat which was found lying beside him."

Mrs. Mildmay glanced at the window, but the captain did not seem to notice.

"The hat was Leicester Dodson's—I knew it by the initials marked inside it—and the flower was one which I gave him late last night."

Mrs. Mildmay uttered a cry of horror, and it was echoed by a voice behind the curtain.

The captain caught her with a cry of alarm. Mrs. Mildmay rushed to the bell.

The door opened and the footman appeared.

"Did you ring, ma'am?" Mr. Thaxton has arrived. "Good-morning, a good-morning!"

At his name Violet seemed relieved.

She drew herself upright from the captain's arms, and, passing her hair from her white forehead, said, with unnatural calm:

"Mr. Thaxton, the lawyer? Show him in!"

(To be continued.)

LOVE'S PERILS.

CHAPTER XXI.

"And these are the men who rule us!" he muttered. "Officers and representatives alike incapable; the one as ignorant of military matters as the others are of state policy. Doctors and painters for soldiers."

While he was thus musing he was startled by the sudden challenge of the sentinel.

"Qui vive? Who goes there?"

Turning, he perceived a man in a peasant's dress, who had evidently attempted to pass the guard unnoticed.

"What must I answer?" said the peasant, in a strong provincial accent.

"What must you answer?" retorted the soldier, standing at "charged arms," "why, 'a citizen peasant, if you are one.'"

"Very well—a citizen peasant, if that suits you," returned the other, smiling.

"So far, so good," said the sentinel. "And now, Mr. Citizen Peasant, you may face to the right about and move off in double-quick time the way you came. You can't pass here."

"I can't pass here? Now is this?" exclaimed the peasant, but this time without a particle of his provincial accent.

His pronunciation was now pure Russian. The young artillery officer, who had noticed this change of accent, started to his feet, and, turning on the man, said quickly:

"Yes, my friend—you can pass."

The sentinel recovered arms, and the peasant moved past him.

"I thank you kindly, sir," said he, addressing the officer.

"Do you belong to this part of the country?" asked the officer.

"Yes, sir, to Orléans!"

"Ah! and how happened you to be in this side of the lines?"

"Those rascally English seized me," replied the peasant, "and set me to work for them in Fort Malbouquet."

"And they dismissed you."

"No—they escaped, 'twas the woful."

"Why?"

"Because they gave me too much work and too little money."

"And where are you going now?"

"To Marseilles."

"Good day, then," said the officer; "a safe journey to you!"

"Thank you, sir," said the peasant, taking the hand which the officer extended to him.

"One moment, more," said the officer. "Where have you been working?"

"In the trenches."

"Did you wear gloves?" asked the officer, coolly. The question evidently embarrassed the peasant. He was silent.

"Yes," continued the officer, "you must have taken that precaution, for otherwise sun and hard work would have burned and calloused your hands. Now I rather pride myself on my small and delicate hands. You have been working—how long?"

"Fifteen days."

"Fifteen days at work on the fortifications—and your hands are as white as mine!"

Then, turning to one of his gunners, the officer said, purposely, in English:

"This man is a spy!"

"I a spy?" exclaimed the peasant, thrown off his guard.

"What! you understand English—do you?" said the officer. "Well, I don't wonder at that. You have been fifteen days among the English, and, of course, picked up some of their language."

"A few words," said the peasant.

"Enough to read the address of a letter entrusted to your charge?" asked the officer, carelessly.

"A letter," stammered the peasant. "To whom?"

"How can I tell? To some royalist, perhaps, to inform him that Louis XVII. has been proclaimed in Toulon."

"If you think so, sir," said the peasant, boldly, "perhaps you'd better search me."

"Just hand me what you have in your pockets," said the officer; "that will be enough."

The peasant readily produced a tinder-box and a Spanish knife.

"This knife might serve for a poignard, on occasion," said the officer.

"Here's a pocket-book," said the peasant, handing him one as he spoke. "It's no great beauty—but we peasants aren't dandies, as of course you know. Look in my pockets yourself, commandant, if you like. Thank my stars, I've got no secrets from you or anybody. I'm a poor honest fellow."

"Oh, I'm not at all curious," said the officer, examining the pocket-book as he spoke. "Not at all. Ah, here's a leaf of fine white paper—very different from the rest. You were afraid of getting short of paper, and so you put this in—oh? It's not of the same texture or colour as the rest. Here! give me back your knife."

The peasant obeyed, remarking:

"All I know is that's a bit of white paper."

"It's damp," said the officer. "I must dry it."

"At the fire?" cried the peasant, in alarm.

"Yes," said the officer, coolly. "Taking care, however, not to burn it."

The peasant, now thoroughly alarmed, glanced about him, saw that the sentinel alone was the principal obstacle to his flight, and acted in the exigency with promptness. Quick as thought, he drew out a pistol and discharged it at the man, who grappled him.

"Soldiers!" shouted the young officer. "Seize the English spy!"

Half a dozen men threw themselves on the peasant, mastered and disarmed him. It was the work of a moment.

"Now," said the officer, calmly, "bring me that match."

A lighted match was placed in his hand, and he held it carefully and closely to the piece of white paper he had taken out of the pocket-book, while the stranger watched his movements intently.

"Ha!" cried the officer, as he examined the paper. "I was right. Here is a despatch written in sympathetic ink. How wonderfully the action of the fire brings out the characters! Signed by the English admiral, and addressed to the king's brother!"

"I am lost!" said the spy.

"Villain!" exclaimed the officer.

"A fool, if you will," retorted the pretended peasant, "but not a villain."

"A spy!" cried the officer, in a tone of loathing.

"Yes—a spy!" replied the prisoner. "I engaged to serve the English—and I kept my word. You were sharper than I. That's the whole story. Now detail a firing-party."

"A firing-party!" exclaimed the officer.

"Certainly," replied the prisoner, coolly. "The fate of a spy is settled in two words—Taken; shot. It's short work."

"You are brave!" said the officer.

"You may as well say so," said the prisoner, proudly. "You pride yourself on your courage, but what is it—the courage of a soldier? who must have the crash of music and the smell of powder to excite him, who if he falls, falls with his country's name upon his lips. Mine is the true courage—the courage of a man who obscurely risks his life twenty times a day, perhaps, to die by an ignominious death—the fate of a forger or an assassin."

"And who are you?" cried the officer.

"A man neither danger nor death appeals," replied the spy—"who has seen death too near to fear him—who, if some great man had chosen to attach me to his person, would have served him faithfully and well; but no matter—it is all over with me now."

The officer had sent one of his men on a message which brought into the battery Sergeant Berthe at the head of a picket of nine men.

"Who is to be shot?" asked the sergeant.

"I," replied the spy, coolly.

The sergeant glanced at him a moment, and then, uttering an exclamation, drew the commandant of artillery aside.

"Sir," said he, "spare the life of that man!"

"You know him, then?"

"I do," replied the sergeant. "I once owed my life to him."

"I am sorry," said the officer, gravely. "He is a spy. Were he my own brother I should make an example of him."

The spy had watched this brief interview closely; though he could not hear the words that passed between the sergeant and the man who held his fate in his hands, he knew very well the purport of their words, and when the sergeant turned mournfully away and covered his face with his hands he knew that all was over.

After a momentary pause, the sergeant approached the prisoner and gave him his hand.

"I have pleaded for your life, but in vain," he said.

"I know it," said the spy, returning the friendly pressure. "But I thank you from the bottom of my soul. Join your men."

The sergeant moved to the head of his command with a heavy step.

"Yes," said the spy, pursuing the train of remark which this incident had interrupted, and addressing the commandant of artillery, "I feel that I have the ability to serve a friend, faithfully—perhaps to save an empire. You see what I am now—a spy, a sort of sentient being, a variety of the human species, with beating heart and speaking voice, but who in ten minutes will be a corpse, with ten balls in his body, fit only to feed the fishes in the bay."

"Have you any favour to ask of me?" said the commandant.

"You soldiers," said the spy, "when you are in my position, ask to have your eyes unbandaged and to give the word of command yourselves. All I ask is that you won't keep me waiting."

"I give you five minutes," said the commandant. "You can entrust the sergeant with your last wishes."

"I have nothing to say," said the prisoner, "except this. Here, sergeant, take my Spanish knife. In the handle is an order for twenty-five pounds sterling, payable in good gold. Give it to your men if I fall dead at the first fire. Otherwise, bestow it in charity. Where's the handkerchief?"

"Here," said the sergeant, who was deeply affected.

The prisoner took the handkerchief from the soldier's hands and tied it securely over his eyes. The sergeant, pale as death, then took the prisoner by the hand and led him a few paces off.

"Now," he said, in a faltering voice, "kneel down, and, oh! forgive me for the part I am compelled to play."

"I have nothing to forgive," said the prisoner.

"One moment more. Let me take one look at the blue sky." He raised the bandage—glanced around him, and then, replacing the handkerchief, said: "It is well—I am ready," and knelt calmly down, facing the infantry platoon entrusted with the execution of the sentence.

The sergeant brought his men into line—and a little drummer on the flank braced his instrument and handled his sticks. At the first roll of the drum the soldiers presented arms; at the second the pieces were levelled at the kneeling prisoner.

"Hold!" cried the commandant of artillery, rushing into the line of fire. "Recover arms! shoulder arms! Sergeant, march your men back to their quarters!"

Cheerily rang out the sergeant's order:

"By the right flank! right face! march!"

The little drummer rattled away a lively quick step and the platoon moved off in quick time, leaving the commandant and the prisoner together. The former approached the latter, raised him to his feet, and tore away his bandage.

"Come hither," he said, kindly. "Your death would be useless to me; and I need your life. You are brave. Well, what is the matter with you?"

"Nothing," gasped the spy, who was paler than a corpse. "Give me a moment to recover. My head swims—my knees fail me. Let me sit down."

"This way," said the young officer, leading him to the root of the tree. "None of my artillerymen must hear us. Sit down—sit down! There, are you comfortable?"

"I am better, thank you," said the spy.

"You are a brave man," said the officer, emphatically. "A braver man I never met. Your life hung on a thread. A word from my lips would have launched your soul into eternity. That word I did not utter; remember that. Remember that to me you owe the remainder of your days—the Heaven you gaze on—the air you breathe. All that belongs to me. Will you be true to me?"

"I will," said the spy, solemnly, rising, and lifting his right hand. "You cannot be other than a man fit to command and fit to be obeyed. There is magic in your voice that fascinates my very soul. Lord Mulgrave offered me money—you have given me life."

"But tell me," said the officer, earnestly, "how you, a Frenchman, came to serve the enemies of your country?"

"I will tell you frankly," replied the spy. "When this revolution broke out I joined the ranks of my countrymen and staked my life in their service. I was among the people at the storm of the Bastille. But when the spirit of the revolution changed—when in the name of liberty, men of blood usurped the reins of power, I lost all hope, and, disgusted and revolted by the reign of terror, became a partisan of the royal cause."

"I, too, am disgusted with the reign of terror!" said the young officer.

"You?" cried the spy.

"Yes, I. But what of that? That reign of terror will not—cannot last. The men of blood are in a miserable minority—they will fall from power,

and France, from this sea of carnage, will arise again, free, beautiful and powerful. But the Bourbons, no more than the Terrorists, are fit to away her destinies. Providence, my friend, will raise up for our beloved country, in the hour of need, the man who will work out the glorious destinies. Have faith in the people! have faith in the future! but abjure the divine right of imbeciles as a snare and a delusion."

"There is that in your words," said the spy, "that inspires me with confidence and hope. I begin to see my error; and deeply and bitterly do I regret that I consented to serve the Lord Mulgrave and the English."

"That error nearly cost you your life," said the officer. "But that is past. Henceforth you will be faithful to me and your country."

"I seek to serve you only," said the spy, "to devote my life to your service. I will be whatever you will—your vassal, your dog, your spy. You will neither sell nor give me away?"

"No, no," said the young officer, much affected. "If you do either, I am free again?"

"Yes, free."

"I am satisfied," said the spy. "Now what service will you put me on?"

"Your passport from Lord Mulgrave will reopen the gates of Toulon to you."

"I can come and go at any time."

"To what part of the city have they carried the powder they removed from yonder magazine?"

"Into the cellars of a house in the Rue St. Roch."

"Well, go thither without loss of time. You must set fire to the powder with a hand-grenade."

"Well?" said the spy.

"You will wait for the signal," continued the officer. "A rocket fired from this point will apprise you that the hour has come, and while Toulon, shaken as by an earthquake, will need all her garrison to quiet the people, and all the people to extinguish the flames, I will seize on the Little Gibraltar which is the key to the gates. Do you hear me?"

"Yes."

"Will you obey me?"

"To the letter. The password?"

"The password?" repeated the officer, in evident embarrassment.

"Give it me or not," said the spy. "But without it I shall be fired on and probably killed. And then who will enter the city and fire the magazine?"

"You are right," said the officer, after a moment's reflection. "Beside, I bestow my confidence wholly, or not at all. Harkon to me—Toulon and Liberty!"

"Toulon and Liberty!" repeated the spy. "Your hand upon our bargain. If I live you shall bless the hour when you saved my life."

"Let your actions answer to your words."

"They shall."

The spy waved an adieu, and approached the sentinel.

"You can't pass!" said the soldier.

"Toulon and Liberty!" whispered the spy, and an instant passage was afforded to the man whom we have lately seen offering his services to Lord Mulgrave, but whom circumstances had rendered the devoted servant of the young commandant of artillery.

CHAPTER XXII.

The commandant of artillery remained at his post, pacing to and fro, and now and then casting an anxious glance in the direction of Toulon, the centre of so many interests and of so many hopes and fears.

His men, worn out with toil and vigil, were reposing at the guns which they never left.

The young officer was roused from his reverie by a footstep, and, looking up, recognized without much satisfaction the countenance of Gasparin, one of the civilians sent by the central government to superintend the military.

"Another of these representatives!" he muttered to himself.

"I was looking for you," said Gasparin.

"Well, sir, here I am," replied the officer, coldly.

"My young friend," said the representative, "you seem to me to be the only man in command here who understands anything about a siege."

"Do you speak as you think?" said the artilleryman.

"Assuredly."

"Well, then," replied the officer, coolly, "you speak the truth."

"If I were master," continued the representative, earnestly, "I would entrust you with the direction of all the works—I have solicited the trust for you, but the general-in-chief and my colleagues are opposed to it and cling to their own plan of attack."

"They are wrong," said the officer.

"Hear me out," continued the representative.

"Six days ago I wrote to the committee, asking to have Cartaux replaced by Dagommier."

"That's well. With Dugommier we may do something."

"I expect an answer every moment," pursued Gasparin. "But they have decided on attacking Forts Feron and Larigues to-night."

"Then we shall be destroyed!" exclaimed the officer.

"Dare you assume a great responsibility?"

"I fear nothing," replied the young commandant.

"Very well. You command the artillery. Oppose the removal of a single piece from this battery. Gain time. Dugommier will arrive and your plan will be adopted. I think it a good one. If it succeeds you are a brigadier-general; if it fails your head falls upon the scaffold."

"Not a gun shall stir from its place. I take the responsibility."

"But can you answer for your men?"

"Do you see this battery?" asked the officer. "Since it has been established here two hundred artillerymen have been killed at their pieces. Not a man would serve here. An hour ago I posted up a placard with the inscription, 'Battery of Fearless Men.' Berla! Sergeant Berla!"

"Here, commandant," cried the sergeant, advancing and saluting his officer.

"How many men have volunteered for the battery?" asked the officer.

"About four hundred," replied the sergeant.

"You see, sir," said the officer, turning to the representative, "whether I can count upon these people."

"Especially when commanded by yourself," replied the representative. "I am satisfied. Farewell, and remember that I was the first who discovered and recognized your military genius."

"Your name!" said the officer.

"Gasparin."

"I should not forget it were I on my death-bed," replied the commandant.

"Farewell," said the representative.

When he had gone the commandant beckoned the sergeant to his side.

"Sergeant," said he, "have you received any education?"

"Yes, commandant, and as for my family—"

"I care nothing for that. I only ask will you be a good and true Frenchman, and serve your country faithfully?"

"Yes, commandant."

"I know not," said the officer, "whether I shall ever be anything more than a commandant of artillery, but—no matter—should you like to be my secretary?"

"Of all things!" replied the sergeant, smiling joyously.

"Well, then, go to your captain and tell him that I request your services. After that report yourself to me."

The sergeant saluted and hastened to obey the order. In the meantime two of the national representatives (Albiste and Freron) had entered the battery, and were issuing orders, in low tones, to the artillerymen. The movement of the guns and the bustle that ensued, attracted the attention of the young commandant, who turned quickly to the scene of tumult, and exclaimed:

"Who dares to meddle with my guns?"

"We do," replied Albiste—"we, the representatives of the people. We want them elsewhere, and we are having them moved."

"Citizens' representatives!" replied the commandant, "my pieces shall not budge an inch. Guns, in battery!"

The soldiers did not hesitate a moment between the orders of their commander and those of the civilians, and the guns, some of which had already been wheeled out of their places, were restored instantly to their former position in battery.

"Ha!" exclaimed Freron, wrathfully, addressing the young officer. "Do you dare to disobey our orders?"

"Do your duty as representatives of the people," replied the commandant, disdainfully. "and leave me to discharge mine as an artilleryist."

"But—" said Freron.

"I will not hear a word," interrupted the officer. "Once for all, these pieces shall not stir an inch. I will spike them first. Beside, this battery is in its proper place. I will answer for it upon my head."

"Boy!" retorted Freron, "you risk it in disobeying the orders of the representatives of the people."

"Well," said the officer. "My head may fall, but it shall never bend. Spy out all you can, then go back to Paris and denounce me at the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal. That is your task. Mine is to take Toulon, and I will take it—I swear it by the name I bear."

"And what is your name?" asked Freron.

"Napoleon Bonaparte!" replied the young artilleryist.

At this moment the roll of a hundred drums was

heard, followed by deafening cries of "Long live the Republic!"

"What is the meaning of this tumult?" asked the Representative Albiste, in some alarm.

"Nothing," replied young Bonaparte. "The army is welcoming the new general."

"The new general!" cried Freron. "Who is he?"

"Dugommier," answered Bonaparte.

"How did you know when we knew nothing of it ourselves?" asked Freron. "Dugommier! Impossible!"

"I have spoken the truth," said Bonaparte, calmly.

"Here he comes," said Freron. "Perhaps he is looking for me."

At this moment General Dugommier presented himself, accompanied by the Representative Gasparin.

"The commandant of artillery?" asked Dugommier, glancing around him.

"Here, citizen general," answered Bonaparte.

"You are a brave young man," said the general. "Citizens," he added, "please to retire. I must converse with the commandant in private."

In obedience to this request Dugommier and Bonaparte were left alone.

"Commandant," said Dugommier. "Gasparin has detailed to me your plan of attack. I approve it heartily. Are you strong enough to execute it? If it fails, I take it all on my shoulders; if it succeeds, you shall have all the honour."

"I will answer for its success," said Bonaparte, firmly.

"Give your orders, then," said the general.

"When shall we attack?" asked Bonaparte.

"Instantly," replied Dugommier.

"Guns!" cried Bonaparte, advancing. "Up with one of your heaviest rockets!"

"What are you about?" exclaimed the general.

"You shall see," replied Bonaparte.

A large rocket was placed against the breast-work and fired. It roared up into the air with the speed of an arrow and then exploded with a loud report, scattering a trail of fire on the wind.

Bonaparte sprang upon a gun and looked in the direction of the city with an expression of intense anxiety.

A period of silence and painful suspense followed—then a tremendous explosion was heard, and a volume of smoke rose like a huge black balloon from the heart of Toulon. The distant clangour of bells, the roll of drums, and shouts and shrieks were heard in the city.

"What was that?" cried Dugommier, grasping the arm of the young artilleryist.

"The powder-magazine of Toulon!" replied Bonaparte, with a smile. "The first blow for victory is struck. Now the city is too busy with its own affairs to interfere with ours."

"Citizens' soldiers," said Dugommier, addressing the troops, "obey the order of the commandant as if it were my own."

"Ah," said Bonaparte, "the hour I panted for has at last arrived. There are my orders. The army will be divided into four columns. Two will observe Forts Malbousquet, Balaguier, and Egulleite. Another will remain in reserve to march whenever there is danger—I will command it. The fourth will have the honour of marching under the order of the commander-in-chief. Captain Muiron, who knows the localities, will lead the van with a battalion. Meanwhile I will throw some hundred shells into the Little Gibraltar. Hark to the drums! The English have woke up! Hurrah! my braves! Long live the Republic!"

The air was rent with the answering shout of

"Long live the Republic!"

"Begin the fire!" shouted Bonaparte.

All along that line of guns was heard the cry of the artilleryist, "In action! Load!"

Amidst the intervals of the crashing guns, the drums beat rapidly, and, with cries of the wildest enthusiasm, the French troops rushed to arms.

It was one o'clock on the morning of the 17th of December, 1793, when all the dispositions were made, and the attack commenced in different points. It was made, in the midst of a terrific storm, the wind raging furiously, the rain pouring in torrents, and the flash of the lightning and the roar of the thunder mingling with the flash and the roar of the artillery.

The French troops engaged in the storm of the Little Gibraltar were mown down by hundreds by the cannon and musketry of the enemy, and by a storm of hand-grenades and huge stones poured down on them from the embattled heights.

They mounted over each other's shoulders, they trampled their dead comrades under foot, they forced all the traverses, and killed the English gunners at their pieces.

At break of day Forts Egulleite and Balaguier were carried.

The whole semicircle of outer defences was stormed and mastered by the French, who had

twelve hundred men killed and wounded, while the allies lost two thousand men in killed, wounded and prisoners.

Terror and confusion reigned in Toulon. Bonaparte's batteries, pouring red-hot shot upon the city, set fire to it in several places.

The English decided to abandon Toulon, and burned everything they could not carry with them. They set fire to the arsenal and naval magazines, and burned the French vessels in the harbour.

As the flames swept upward from the city and the bay a cry of rage arose from the ranks of the republican army.

They asked to be led to the assault to prevent the English from embarking, and to make them pay dear for the losses they had caused. But it was too late; and while the French batteries poured down a storm of shot and shells the English fleet swept out of the harbour, comparatively unharmed by the French guns.

The galley-slaves had broken their chains, and, throwing themselves into the arsenal, succeeded in extinguishing the conflagration which the English had kindled.

On the evening of the eighteenth the French general, surrounded by his staff, and by the representatives of the people, stood upon an eminence and looked down on the abandoned city.

Bonaparte approached him.

"General," said he, in a low tone, "have I kept my word?"

"Nobly," answered the general, grasping his hand. "Citizens," he said, addressing the civilians and the troops, "behold in this young man the hero of the hour—Napoleon Bonaparte, the victor of Toulon!"

"Long live Napoleon Bonaparte!" shouted a hundred voices. The cry was taken up, and rang from rank to rank, till the air was rent with deafening applause.

"Soldiers," said Bonaparte, raising his plumed hat from his brow, "but for your bravery my plans would have been in vain. No one man can claim this glory; the victory is not mine, but ours! Long live France."

"Well said!" cried Dugommier, "well said, General Bonaparte! For the Republic, mindful of your virtues, has conferred that rank upon your merit. Three cheers, comrades, for General Bonaparte!"

And again and again the welkin rang with the applause.

(To be continued.)

TOO AMIABLE BY HALF.

THERE was one point concerning which I never attempted to deceive myself, or get up the slightest momentary delusion. I was a stupid girl, and I knew it. I do not mean to write Best Anderson down an idiot, by any means. I never was that, even in my slowest days, and nobody called me silly. I think I have used the correct word without noticing it. I was slow. It took me three times as long, when a child, to learn my lessons as it did the others; but there was one thing—a fact at length stowed away in my memory, remained there. This consoled me somewhat. I always liked a joke. I do now; but as a rule it puzzles me at first, and I only begin to laugh just as other people have finished. At least I used to, of course, unless taken by surprise. I have gained wisdom sufficient to laugh first, and wait till I am quiet again to understand the matter.

I was the youngest of rather a large family, with several years between me and the son who was nearest my age. I was really and truly christened Best; it was a fancy of my poor mother's. They said it came about in this way. Before my birth, my father was involved in business difficulties, which threatened to ruin him utterly; and the dear mother was very nervous, and anxious at the thought of a sixth baby coming into the world at a moment so inauspicious. But it seems I insisted upon being born all the same. I think I must have exhausted my obstinacy in that struggle, for nobody has ever accused me of being stubborn, or at least inconsiderate of others.

My father happened to be absent that day, and did not return until I was eighty-and-forty hours old, and—my old nurse told me afterwards—the reddest thing she ever saw, short of a boiled lobster. It appears that the mother was quite apologetic for my being there at all. I really must remark, in passing, that I have often noticed such trouble on the part of wives, and it has always immensely tickled my slow sense of humour, that idea of being apologetic to one's lord and master for the intrusion of his own baby! It strikes me as letting the masculine privilege of grumbling go rather far; and I have occasionally wondered that some adventurous femi-

nine spirit has never got the example of claiming it, where each matters are concerned.

However, it seems that my father was very tender of her, and absolutely biased me, which, I am told, is a greeting fathers do not always bestow on their sixth children, professing to be delighted, and when the mother murmured something about "the last" (whatever she meant) he added, cheerfully,

"And the best," and mamma was so charmed, that she gave me that for a name.

Poor mother! She died when I was a little over two years old. I think I remember her—I like to think so, at least. My father remained a widower until after I was five; then the two oldest girls married—one at eighteen, the other almost a year younger—and, as they had been good, womanly creatures, who had taken care of matters very nicely, papa was quite at a loss, for there were three growing boys and useless me to be thought of. Before this time he was richer than ever, but money, as many a widower has learned, will not always make a comfortable home.

So, everybody said papa ought to marry, and he rather gloomed at the prospect. He had loved his dead wife very dearly, and, besides that, had a horror of stepmothers: from the recollection of his own. Moreover, papa began to think of himself as elderly (he was only forty-two) and there is still a good deal of life, often full of odd experiences yet, before one at that age.

What should happen to papa but to fall in love again. Yes, indeed, and with a dear good woman as ever lived. Aunt Mary (she never would let us be forced to call her mother) was about twenty-seven, a handsome girl—gay, fond of society, and all that. But she married my father, and did it because she loved him; and they were happy together.

In the winter, they went to London or Edinburgh, in the summer, we lived at a lovely country place on the coast of a northern county.

When I was fourteen, poor Aunt Mary was thrown from her horse, and injured her spine so terribly that it was doubtful if she could ever walk again.

I was ready to do all I could, and many a woman, even an own mother, would have let me become a regular slave, either by her side or in the charge of the house. Aunt Mary would hear of nothing of the sort. Nurse Waters was appointed to devote herself solely to the invalid, and Aunt Mary managed to have the household go more comfortably on and was still its director.

I wish I could tell you what patience she showed in her sufferings—and she suffered martyrdom. I cannot think of them without tears. But after a while, there used to come intervals of repose from pain, and in spite of all I think Aunt Mary never regarded herself as a woman especially to be pitied. My father fairly spent his life in her rooms. Her friends came to visit her. She was wonderfully animated, and had no end of resources in herself. And so the days went by, and Aunt Mary, by dint of never being an hour in advance to take his trouble, twice over, still made existence tolerable to herself and was like a sunbeam to everybody else.

So I got to be eighteen.

An hour has passed since I wrote that last paragraph. I wanted to remember how I looked at that age, so I laid down my pen and went off into the morning-room to study a portrait, which was painted of me that summer. I stared examining the picture, until I forgot my errand in the absorbing recollections when he so far back (for I am thirty-five now) that they seem absolutely to belong to another life.

But the portrait.

It is not a beautiful face; but I think it worth looking at all the same. The eyes are too sad, the mouth has a weary, patient expression which does not belong to that age; the accents in the cheeks are too faint, but the whole countenance is brightened by a great cloud of auburn hair (my one real beauty) and which I always wore in those days.—to please Aunt Mary, who was very proud of my chignon—in heavy, waving masses down my back. I was not sad by temperament; as a rule, I was cheerful, if not gay, though subject to moods of an almost morbid melancholy, which I fought against with all my might and main.

Nurse always said I got that wistful, troubled expression of countenance from the poor dead mother—the melancholy too; for all the dark months before my birth she suffered great physical pain, added to the heavy mental burdens caused by the trouble which menaced my father, and threatened to wreck the fortune of her children. I was pretty well educated, thanks to Aunt Mary, who never lost patience with my slowness, and always superintended my studies. I had no marked talents. I was a conscientious musician, and an understanding one; but it was always work, not inspiration. I could not draw, and I was only a moderate linguist; but I think in everything I tried to do my best; and Aunt

Mary seldom let a day go by without encouraging me by saying that I was "twice best, once by name and once by nature." And papa loved me, and so did my brothers, though of course, they feared me a great deal, and altogether, I was very happy.

Then, Cousin Tom went away to Germany. Of course, I missed him terribly; but I could not let that make me unhappy, because it was right he should travel and see foreign countries before settling down to the duties of his profession. He was twenty-two then.

Cousin Tom was not my cousin. He was a distant relative of Aunt Mary, who had been left his guardian soon after her marriage, so that Tom had been as much at home in the house as my brothers themselves. We grew up together. Tom was always my defender, and was my child lover. Oddly enough the matter seemed to be as completely settled in the minds of our elders as in our own.

Aunt Mary told me after he came back from college, Tom and I were regularly engaged. We were to be married when I should reach twenty.

My dear old Tom! how fond everybody was of him. No human being could help it. "Handsome Tom Harcourt" he was usually called; greatly to Aunt Mary's displeasure. Indeed, though she loved him truly, she was the one stern judge Tom found, and the only times in my life that I ever felt a grievance against her (I could not feel angry) were on Tom's account.

My father indulged him much more than he did his own boys, feeling, I suppose, that he had less responsibility; and my brothers, though two of them were older than he, yielded to Tom's wishes and Tom's opinions as if he had been Mentor instead of the wildest young fellow that lived, with a capability of getting into scrapes, which I never saw equalled.

He was as clever as he was handsome, too clever, Aunt Mary vowed. His talents were so versatile, that she said the fact of being able to do so many things well without trouble would, unless he took great heed, prevent his attaining real excellence in any one line.

But none of the rest of us believed this, and Tom no more than we.

He was a brilliant student; but he lacked application, and, instead of graduating at nineteen, as my brothers did, he was past twenty-one when he left college, and rather in disgrace with Aunt Mary; for he had once narrowly escaped expulsion, just from tricks, which his inordinate love of fun led him into. But when Tom told his own side of the story, he did it in so droll a fashion that though Aunt Mary did would not laugh, (the rest of us were almost in fits; I never heard papa laugh so) she was too wise to be other than gentle and conciliatory.

But Tom got a long lecture from her before he went away. He told me of it himself, adding:

"I shall never forget it. I mean to begin to be steady, now."

She reminded him his fortune was so moderate that he needed to work hard in his profession; that he had taken a solemn vow upon himself; that his future happiness lay in his hands.

"You have a good heart," Tom she said, "but you are fickle, carried away by impulses; always meaning to do right, but never beginning. Tom, take care that the Bible saying does not continue in your case, 'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.' Tom, if any trouble should come to my heart through you, I think I never could forgive you. I know that I never could forgive myself."

She said a great deal more, too; and I was shocked and grieved that she could even imagine such horrible possibilities, which I know could not be possible.

But Tom laughed gaily, and said she was a dear old thing, and a dear little goose, and he a bad boy, who meant to do better. Better, indeed! As if Tom's worst was not far beyond than anybody else's highest excellence.

So Tom left for Germany, and the months went on.

He travelled far and wide. There came such good accounts of him from friends who met him. His letters were so frequent (my private ones did not count) that even Aunt Mary was as loud almost as the others in her praise, and her belief for his future.

He left at the end of February. That summer Pauline Ford came to visit us. She was my cousin, though I had never seen her before; that is to say, she was the daughter of a half-sister of my father.

The Fords had lived for years in Italy. Pauline was born there, and I had scarcely ever heard their names mentioned.

Mrs. Ford had made a fierce quarrel with my father about property, and after that Mr. Ford, I believe, did not behave well in regard to some other

money matters; but papa never talked of these things.

Well, suddenly there reached us a letter from Pauline. Her parents were both dead.

Her mother, on her death-bed, had bidden her write to her uncle, regretting that she herself could not write, to say how sorry she was that she had ever misjudged him. Pauline's letter was a beautiful one. She wanted, not help, but advice. She was left poor. She wished to earn her own living; but she desired to feel that, in coming to her native land, which she had never seen, there would be a welcome for the orphan from her mother's relatives. She appeared to know all about us. Some friends of ours had told her; and if she had lived half her life with papa, and Aunt Mary she could not have known better how to make her appeal so as to touch their warmest feelings; ay, and their weaknesses, for they were only human like the rest of us.

Papa wrote to her—Aunt Mary wrote—I wrote—and they promised her a warm welcome and much love. We got news that she was to come by a certain steamer. When the steamer was telegraphed, papa went to meet her.

My father had counted up the years, and found that Pauline must be about twenty-five; so I expected to see almost an old maid. Twenty-five looks old to eighteen.

Well, she came—the most fascinating girl I ever beheld; not regularly handsome, but with such wonderful eyes, such teeth, such smiles, such power of conversation, such wit, such a sense of humor, that I could no more describe than than I could paint her portrait.

Now, when I tell you that in a month Pauline Ford was the ruling spirit, not only in our house, but among all our circle of friends, and the neighbourhood was a large one, I do not exaggerate.

Her avowed intention had been to go out as governess. She believed that she had no right to waste her life to be dependent on others. How it came about Heaven and Pauline may know; I do not, but before the summer ended, she was definitely established in our home. My father had become convinced that Aunt Mary wanted a companion. Aunt Mary had become convinced that papa wished for an older person than his head of the house. Both were convinced that I needed Pauline "to finish me." She spoke French and Italian like a native. She sang splendidly. She painted like an artist. She was willing to stay if she could be of more use there than elsewhere. It would be a plain duty. There was no nonsense about her. She accepted a fixed salary, and it was a very large one, as it ought to have been, considering what she undertook. The housekeeper, after being supposed faithful for years, was discovered to have been "feathering her nest" beautifully. Pauline found it out in going over accounts for Aunt Mary.

The case was plain, though the housekeeper swore the figures in the books had been altered.

So Pauline took the charge of matters herself. She gave me lessons.

Altogether, the sum made up by the relinquishing the masters and all reached two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

The house went on by clockwork. We had more company than usual—papa found it would be good for Aunt Mary—and Pauline was like the mistress, and a charming one she made.

Nobody but I had a shadow of fault to find with her, and I only one so vague that I was ashamed to speak of it. She was too amiable by half. Somehow, I could not believe in her sincerity; it was so easy for her to be "all things to all men."

As I look back, I feel sure that I was never either envious or jealous of her. She potted me immensely, did her best with my poor talents, invested pretty dresses for me, praised me incessantly; but somehow she made me feel a mere child, and papa, and even Aunt Mary, who had begun to treat me like a woman, seemed to get the same idea, and never did I feel my shyness and awkwardness so keenly, though Pauline said they would pass.

Somehow, Aunt Mary rather felt them too, though she was so loving and tender as ever. Only Pauline was so much more a companion for her than I that I was more thrown on my own society than ever in my life.

Of course Pauline knew all about my engagement from the first. The very day after her arrival she discovered me copying a portrait of Tom in crayons. She came upon me suddenly. When I looked up she was studying the picture with an odd smile. The whole story came out naturally. There was no reason for secrecy with her, though the engagement was still considered private.

That autumn there were great changes. We had never gone to town to live since Aunt Mary's invalid days began, but this year we went.

The doctor had an idea. Aunt Mary had not let

heart on it. Aunt Mary had an idea that papa thought she was worse and must have variety. Papa had an idea that he had been keeping his wife stationary longer than was necessary or pleasant to her, and I had an idea that all the alterations were for my sake and felt horribly guilty, though I did not venture to speak for fear of distressing my pastors and masters, after their good nature in sparing themselves for me.

Papa's town house was let, but, fortunately, the tenant wished to give it up, so we got it again.

There were to be some new carpets bought. Papa and I decided that when we went over the house with Pauline.

Those new carpets resulted in refurbishing the place from top to bottom. Who was the means of it, not one of us could have told. Papa thought it an extravagance of his, Aunt Mary and I thought it ours. It was a pleasant winter. Aunt Mary was still confined to her sofa; but she could be wheeled into the drawing-room; and to my unsophisticated mind we passed a very gay season.

Aunt Mary gave me a coming-out party; and I was horrified to find that I had made her think I expected it—I could not imagine how.

Papa insisted on musical evenings, because Mary enjoyed them, and Mary insisted on late suppers to an intimate circle of agreeable people, because papa liked them.

I think each of us three was privately astonished to find how many whims he or she had developed; but we believed they were ours, and were content.

Pauline was the life of the house, and helped each of us in our caprices to her full ability, and that was her limit.

She had personally a charming position in society, and everybody knew that she only entered the world to please us.

She had several offers, not fortuneless; but she said she never meant to marry.

She was a predestined old maid, who had already found her mission, about which she used to talk in the most amusing way, and, papa's papa's espagnoles, and wrinkle her face, to show us how she would look when she got elderly and strong-minded.

Before spring came, I was dreadfully perplexed: with one side of me I adored Pauline, with the other I doubted her. Papa and Aunt Mary had only one side where she was concerned, and they considered her an angel of goodness and merriment. I could not reconcile matters; but I had, always known I was slow. Pauline a saint, Pauline going to daily service, attentive to Aunt Mary, taking moments sacrificing herself for us, was one thing. Yet I knew that Sophy Moore was engaged to John Henderson, and Sephy got so jealous of Pauline, that she broke off the match.

I knew that Mr. James was not to be invited to the house, because he had a bad reputation, yet Pauline was on good terms with him. I knew—but, bless me, my knowing changed nothing; and I was so confused that I could not be certain what I knew, except that I must be making mistakes if I believed ill of Pauline.

But I did. How ashamed I was! I did mistrust her and set it down to envy and jealousy, and adored her all the more, to make up for my wickedness; and she told me my faults, and forgave them, and left me more conscience-stricken than ever. What completed my humiliation was the fact that papa, who had the reputation of being rather cynical and suspicious and Aunt Mary, who if she had a fault, was too clear-sighted as to people's motives, believed wholly in Pauline.

The winter went by. Spring came. It was the middle of May before we returned to our home. By this time, I think, if I had considered that Pauline was employed entirely on my account, I should have found courage to tell papa or Aunt Mary that I thought myself quite old enough to be done with lessons, and, indeed, where other matters were concerned, to get on by myself.

But I knew now that whatever they might think Pauline was essential to their comfort, and I could not speak.

Besides, Pauline needed a home; and however courageous she might be, however determined not to remain anywhere, unless "her poor services, when used to the utmost, were absolutely a necessity," she ought not lightly to be told that there was no longer a need thereof.

But, indeed, as spring approached, Pauline rather took the thing into her own hands, and left me a great deal to myself.

"You don't need me," she said, "and Aunt Mary does. Amuse yourself, little one, and leave the commonplace, shady side of life to me; I can use it to it."

And, after that day, somehow, Aunt Mary insisted on sparing me more and more from attendance on her; was always inventing excuses for me, and sending me away from her room. I was too young

to be tied there; my health would suffer; and I submitted, without a word, because I believed she preferred Pauline's society to mine. Yet, during many hours each day almost, Pauline was making visits or going out somewhere; and I had to go too; and the things always seemed done for my benefit, or else because Aunt Mary appeared so certain that I desired the amusement, that I dared not say a word.

Spring came, and we went back to Sunny Hill: it also brought Tom with it. Tom, grown older and handsomer and more delightful in every way only from the first not the Tom of old times. But of course everybody, except a "show" person, would have expected travel to make changes. He was quite an elegant, dashing man now, with a long, curling, brown moustache, and could talk about every place on the Continent and in the East—and as Pauline was the only person of the household who had visited all those famous haunts, naturally they had a great deal to converse about which was Greek to poor me, familiar as books and photographs had made me with scenes and pictures and famous statues.

Time went on, and a cloud rose between us. It had been decided that he need not go seriously to work till autumn, so he spent the summer with us.

If I were to say I was jealous, I should not express my meaning. Had I really believed that anything had come between Tom's heart and his love for me I should have had courage enough to act, but I really did not think this. I only thought he had grown so much older and manlier that my unformed girlishness—I seemed so young and childish—disturbed him a little.

I have almost reached the point I had set myself in the matter of space, so I must skip details and the record of my own feelings and reach the denouement. It was not very long coming, though it seemed to me that I suffered in advance enough to have filled up an ordinary lifetime.

The worst of all was to be forced to despise myself, and I did, for I was jealous. Yes, I was jealous. I had never thought such weakness possible. I had said, the moment I could reach that pass love would be dead, and so jealousy out of the question. Theories are very fine, and mine were as fine as those of other people; but I ended where I began—I was jealous. I did not know it. I did not give that name to the sentiment. But I had reason. Yes, I had. Oh, my poor Tom! My foolish, weak, capricious Tom, whose heart (I really believe now) was mine all the while, only his fancy was so wayward and so strong that when it chose to assert itself he believed it actually the voice of his soul and only found out his mistake when it was too late.

The end was about like this and it is only the consolation you will care for. I had been for a long walk. Tom had not come to accompany me as he promised, so I set off alone, and I suppose just because I was vexed I walked much farther than I ought; for I had not been very strong that summer, and good old Dr. Butler had warned me against fatiguing myself.

But I walked as far as the Dell, a beautiful nook in a wood nearly four miles from the house. Suddenly I found that I was dreadfully tired and sat down to rest. It was a lovely day. There had been a great deal of rain the week before, and the weather was cool and pleasant. I sat down, and before I knew it I was fast asleep. How long I slept I do not know; but I was awakened by the sound of voices, and, without being conscious what I was doing, I listened for a little, half-believing myself still asleep.

What I heard was Pauline Ford crying bitterly, and telling Tom how unhappy she was in our house. Then I heard Tom Harcourt avow his love for her. More than that, they had met in Italy for three days, and he said he had loved her from the first moment he set eyes on her.

The next I recollect I was running away through the woods like a mad creature and the first thing clear to my mind was Pauline's smile when she looked at Tom's portrait the day after she reached our house. After that I was in my room and the door locked. How I got there I cannot tell. It was all like a dream; but locking the door somehow roused me.

It was three o'clock when I entered my chamber. At six we dined, and there were guests invited. I appeared, and I must have looked tolerably like my ordinary self, for nobody remarked me particularly. Of course, Aunt Mary was not at table. As usual Pauline occupied the seat which ought to have been hers. I remember gaily old Venables was there and led Pauline into dinner and I wondered dreamily how she could let his bloated, wicked eyes look at her as they did. Once she spoke to me.

"Best," she said, "Mr. Harcourt and I missed you and went as far as the Dell, thinking you must be there, but we did not see you."

I laughed, and made some idle answer. Tom was not at dinner; he had received a telegram which called him to London.

Margaret Winslow was there, a nice old maid whom I loved. She was going the next day to her place in Devonshire. I called her up to my room, and asked her to insist on my going. She went to Aunt Mary, and made such a point of it, there was no possibility of refusal. She came back to my chamber and said I was to go. She asked me no questions; gave me no reason to think she fancied there was anything amiss. It was years before she told me that she knew what had happened as well as if I had put it into words.

We left the next day for London. Once in town, giving no explanation, I told her I had an errand to do. I left her at the hotel and drove to Tom's lodgings. He was at home. I was shown up to his room. He was writing. I knew it was a letter to me.

"Tom," said I, for I was close by him before he perceived me, "you need not finish that letter now."

He sprang to his feet with a sort of groan and turned white as a ghost.

"Sit down," said I, and I took a seat opposite him; then I went on: "Tom, I came to tell you that I cannot marry you. I have made up my mind—I could go no farther. I had meant to tell him that I was engaged to spare him, but the falsehood would not be uttered. Presently I heard myself saying (it sounded in my ears like a stranger's voice): 'Tom, I was in the Dell yesterday. I heard what you said to Pauline. I did not mean to listen—you know that. Good-bye, Tom—be happy! Don't have any scruples; be sure that I would not marry you if you begged till doomsday! I don't love you! I know now that I never did!'"

Then I turned and ran away—ran down the stairs as if life depended on my speed. I think he called after me, I think he followed, but I sprang into the carriage and was driven away. By the time I reached the hotel I was sane enough to recollect that I ought not to have gone to his house, but I could not be sorry. It was time for the train. Off Margaret and I drove down to the station.

Some hours after we were at her house. I was very ill for a week, but she did not let papa or Aunt Mary know anything about it.

When I got able I wrote Aunt Mary, and told her that I never meant to marry Tom; she and papa must consider the matter settled, for I never would do it.

A fortnight later I went home. The first news to greet me was that Pauline had engaged herself to Mr. Venables. Aunt Mary was disgusted; but Pauline listened to her objection without a word, and went her own way.

Mary had her eyes opened by now. I shall always believe Margaret Winslow wrote to her, but I do not know. She tried to make me own that Pauline had caused the trouble between Tom and me, but I kept my own counsel.

Pauline herself endeavored to make me feel she was not to blame. She called me into her room that first night. For once in her life she got dreadfully nervous. She gave me letters to read to prove her innocence, and gave a wrong one—a letter to a friend in Italy—in which she owned that she had just led Tom on—a weak fellow she called him—in order to bring Mr. Venables to the point, I read that letter deliberately through—it was the one mean thing I have ever done in my life. I handed it back, opened, she glanced at the page, saw what she had done, and said, coolly:

"Well, go and tell Aunt Mary, if you choose."

"I shall tell nobody," I said, and took myself off.

She was married in less than month, and the first news of the business Tom received—he had not been back—was an invitation to her wedding. These things happened long, long years ago. Six months after Tom asked me to forgive him. I did not, but I told him I could not marry him. He had asked me regularly ever since—once each year. I am thirty-five now. Papa and Aunt Mary are alive—papa hale and vigorous, Mary able to get about by the aid of a helping arm. We live at the old house, still, and are very happy. The Venables went abroad directly after the wedding. Mr. Venables lived till two years ago, and Pauline made a model wife. Last month she married an Italian duke, and no doubt will make him a model wife too. She writes us beautiful letters, which I answer. Aunt Mary will not.

P. S.—Tom has just come back from Australia. He is in poor health. He has grown very old. I may as well tell you one thing more. Last night he asked me over again to marry him, and this time I said—yes.



[THE COWSLIP.]

FLOWERS: THEIR LANGUAGE, SENTIMENT, SYMBOLS AND INTERPRETATION.

By PHILANTHOS.

VOCABULARY.

CLIANTHUS. (*Clanthus puniceus*.) Worldliness. Self-seeking.

The Clanthus is a handsome half-creeping shrub, with pinnated leaves and large pealike scarlet blossoms, recently introduced from New Zealand to our greenhouses. It will stand the winter near the sea, if protected by mulching the roots and matting up in severe seasons. It is propagated by cuttings and suckers.

CLOTUR. Rudeness. Pertinacity.—See Burdock.

CLOVES. THE CLOVE TREE. (*Caryophyllus aromaticus*.) Dignity.

The nail-like fruit of the clove is well known. The French call them *Clous* (nails) de giroflier. The Carnations and Pinks belong to the same order. The aromatic Clove Tree was brought from the Moluccas to this country towards the close of the last century, and is with us a stove plant. It is said that in its native country the word Clove is used as a mark of distinction and dignity, hence its significance. At their funerals, and in public ceremonies, nobles, in naming their titles, are spoken of as of one, two, or three Cloves. The Clove Pink may be used to express Dignity in the absence of the Tree blossom.

CLOVER, FOUR-LEAVED. Be Mine.
CLOVER, RED. (*Trifolium pratense*.) Industry.
CLOVER, WHITE. (*Trifolium repens*.) Think of Me.

There are more than twenty varieties of Clover, which we need not specify here.

The Red, meadow, or common Clover is well known, as also the White or Dutch Clover, as among our most valuable of fodder plants, one acre of Clover

being nearly as productive in food as three of ordinary grasses. Chalky or limey soils are peculiarly favourable to its growth.

As there is a controversy as to whether the common Clover or the Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), which is the Emblem of Joy in our vocabulary, is the true Irish Shamrock. I shall postpone my remarks to the Wood Sorrel—which see.

As to the Four-leaved Shamrock, that is, in my opinion, a Clover, and English people have always so considered it. Children diligently "seek a four-leaved shamrock in all the fairy dell," and the modern popular song tells us how "potent is the spell" worked by the finder if worked for good. Old books of astrology tell us how "the lucky finder of a Four-leaved Clover shall abortive hap on great good fortune." And Herrick, the poet, says:—

Glide by the ranks of virgins then and pass
The showers of roses, lucky Four-leaved Grass,
The while the crowd of young boys sing
And drown ye in a flowerie spring.

It is lucky for the bees when the farmer sows his fields with Clover, and what child does not know the honey that its flower-stalks contain? Shakespeare talks of

The speckled cowslip, burnet, and sweet Clover,
And who, as he gazes on glowing purple Clover-fields in sunshine, cannot say—

It doth remind me of an old low strain
I used to sing in happy summers dead,
When I was but a child, and when we played
Like April sunbeams among the blooming flowers,
Or romped in dew with weak, complaining lambs.

Or with the poet of the "Seasons"—

'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
Joined to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
Of flocks, thick-nibbling through the Clovered vale.

CORDEA SCANDENS. Gossip. This, from its free growth and hardihood, is becoming a popular climber for arbours and trellises, and gives a good opportunity for clearing its supports, as it dies down to the roots

every year, and often the root also, unless protected. The safest way is to take cuttings and pot them and on the return of warm weather plant them out its large green flower buds, and their change when almost expanded to a dull purple, with its free growth and abundant foliage recommend it. There are some fine specimens on umbrella-shaped wire stands at the Alexandra and the Crystal Palaces.

COCKLE.—See Corn Cockle.

COCKSCOMB. (*Amaranthus Celosia*.) Poppery. Affectation. Singularity.—See Love-lies-Bleeding.

This showy Amaranth has clearly taken its attributes from its popular name, as the name was suggested by the similarity of the flower to a very full crimson crest of the gay, strutting cock of the walk. Otherwise, the Amaranth of the poets (for which we have chosen our wild-flower, *Amaranthus Blitum*), has very different and higher sentiments (Immortality, and Unfading Love) attributed to it. However, most of the vocabulary-makers, in this as in many other instances, seem either careless or ignorant of these things, and hence much incongruity and inconsistency is already imported into the Language of Flowers, which it would require very large innovations and authority to redress. I shall, therefore, retain the Cockscorn Amaranth as the Emblem of Poppery and Affectation.

COLONICUM AUTUMNALIS.—See Saffron, Meadow, and Crocus, Saffron.

COLTSFOOT. (*Tussilago*.) Justice shall be Done. We shall take as the type of this branch of the Daisy tribe the *Tussilago Farfara*; which is one of the earliest of our spring flowers, on marl or limestone soils, and often grows on the embankments of railways before any other herbaceous flower shows itself. In March and April it is to be found on clayey spots by the roadside, with purple stalks and large leaves, of pale-green white on the underside, and starlike white flowers. It is a most obstinate weed, and its roots will send up a plant from the smallest bit left in the ground. Its name in French, Italian and other languages indicates, however, its reputation as a cough-remedy, from "tussis" a cough and "ago" I act on. Its decoction is bitter and demulcent, and as a candy Coltsfoot lozenges are celebrated. It is also smoked as a British herb-tobacco and is said in this way to soothe neuralgic pains. When rolled down, wetted with saltpetre and then dried, it was formerly in request for tinder, in days when as yet lucifers were unknown.

COLUMBINE. (*Aquilegia vulgaris*.) Folly.

COLUMBINE, PURPLE. Resolved to win.

COLUMBINE, RED. Anxious and Trembling.

This graceful little flower, in white, blue, purple, or pink attire has long been a favourite in the cottage garden flower-border:

In pink or purple hues arrayed, and oftentimes in white,

We see within the woodland glade the Columbine delight;

Some three feet high, with stem erect, the plants unaided grows,

And at the summit, now defect, the strange-formed flower blows.

How early it was known Geoffrey Chaucer testifies:

Come gather now with their eyes Columbine,

And Spenser follows with two colours:

Bring hither pink and purple Columbine

Its Latin name is from *Aquila*, an eagle, its spur-shaped nectary being supposed to resemble an eagle's claw, while the whole flower bears a likeness to a Columba, or dove.

Their nectaries have certainly a yet closer resemblance to the turned-over cap of our ancient jesters, and hence no doubt it has been taken as an Emblem of Folly. Here is its poetical description, in cheerful verse:

Examine well each floweret's form—

Read ye not something more

Than curl of petal, depth of tint?

Saw ye e'er aught before

That claims a fancied semblance there,

Amid those modelled leaves so fair?

Know ye the cap which folly wears

In ancient masques and plays?

Does not the Columbine recall

That joy of olden days?

And is not Folly reigning now

O'er many a wisdom-written brow?

Gather ye laurels for a crown

For every prince of song—

For all to whom philosophy

And wisdom do belong:

But ne'er forget to intertwine

A flower or two of Columbine.

Weave ye an armful of that plant,
 Choosing the darkest flower,
 With that red, blood-dipped wreath ye bring
 To devastating power
 Of warrior, conqueror, and chief;
 Oh, twine that full of folly's leaf.
 And do ye ask me why this flower
 Is fit for every brow?
 Tell me but where folly ne'er
 Hath dwelt, nor dwelleth now,
 And I will then the laurel twine
 Mingled with the Columbine.

CONVOLVULUS, WILD. Bonds.—See Bindweed.
 CONVULVULUS, MAJOR. Extinguished Hope.
 CONVULVULUS, MINOR. Repose. Night.
 CONVULVULUS, PINK. Worth Sustained by Tender Affection.

The Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) has already been figured and noticed as the Emblem of Humility. We take the *Calystegia sepium*, or Great Hooded Bindweed, for the Emblem of Bonds. This is the beautiful creeper, with large white bell-shaped flowers, trailing in the hedges, with arrow-shaped leaves, and single flower-stalks. It is sometimes striped with pink, and from June to September is a most ornamental climber. Its flowers are sensitive to rain and it twists up its approach. It has medicinal properties in its roots similar to Scammony. The *Calystegia Soldanella* (*Seaside Convolvulus*) with its rose-coloured flowers, which is found on the coast of Kent and elsewhere, may serve for the same emblem. We may note that jalap is produced from a South American *Convolvulus*. The Major and Minor *Convolvuli*, blue and pink, are too familiar as garden-flowers to deserve more detailed mention.

CORONILLA. Always Cheerful.

CORIANDEL. (*Coriandrum sativum*.) Hidden Merit. We know this little plant chiefly by its seeds, which are aromatic and carminative, and used by apothecaries to conceal the taste of other drugs; by confectioners in sweetmeats, and by some in plum-bread. In France and Germany the Coriander is cultivated commercially. It has a cluster of white or pinkish flowers on the tops of the branches, which are about two feet high; the stalks are round, upright and hollow, but have a pith in the centre.

The plant, when fresh, has a most disagreeable smell, but as the seeds dry they become sweet and fragrant, whence the Coriander may deserve to be the Symbol of Hidden Merit.

A renowned recipe in olden time for making "Honey Water" runs thus:

Take of Coriander seeds, 8 ozs.; fresh lemon peel, nutmeg, storax and gum benzoin of each ½ oz.; vanilla, 3 drachms; spirits of wine, 3 pints.

Infuse for 24 hours, distill, and if it be thought requisite, scent with amber essence or musk. This is cephalic, nervine, cordial, paretic and cosmetic; the dose, half an ounce.

CORN. Riches.

CORN COCKLE. CORN POPPY. (*Papaver Rhæas*.) Gentility. In Tyas's vocabulary, Consolation. This, the common scarlet Corn Poppy, will be found under Poppy.

CORNEL. WILD CORNEL. DOGWOOD. (*Cornus sanguinea*.) Duration.

This Emblem of Duration derives its significance from the hardness of its wood, which in ancient times was made into weapons of war, notably into pikes and javelins. Arrows, skewers, toothpicks and needles for bobbin-work are made from our wild Cornel, which is hardly large enough to be called a tree.

The bright coral red of its twigs in hedges makes it easily recognizable in winter time, as it is in spring by its white bloom, and in autumn by its purple and finally black berries and dull green leaves, which turn red towards winter. These berries on the continent are pressed for oil. It is right I should note that Tyas described the Cornelian Cherry (*Cornus meris*) as the tree praised by Virgil, and of which the javelin of Romulus was made, which he hurled over Mount Palatine after tracing out the outer walls of the city in after times become the mistress of the world.

It is narrated that the shaft of the javelin was of Cornel wood, that it penetrated the earth, took root, grew, put forth leaves and branches and became a tree—a happy omen of the strength and hardihood of the infant empire.

Three woods are mentioned by Virgil as forming the bow, arrows, and spear—

The war from stubborn myrtle shafts receives
 From Cornel javelins, and the tougher yew,
 Receive the bending figure of a bow.

In America, the Dogwood is a handsome tree, with as a shrub; in Scotland, the Cornel is a woody, creeping herb, not a foot high.

The Greeks dedicated the Cornel tree to Apollo

and made it an emblem of the Arts. Bacon calls this tree a "Cornelian."

COWSLIP AMERICAN.—See AMERICAN COWSLIP. COWSLIP. (*Primula veris*.) Pensiveness. Winning grace. In Tyas, Early Joy.

Everybody knows the pretty Cowslip. The "fragrant dweller by the sea" of the poets, the "Petty Mullein," and Palsy-wort of the rustic herb-gatherer; but everybody does not know that its country name is given on account of its imputed medicinal virtues, not only here, but in France, where it is called "Herbe-paralyse" by the peasants. The "Family Herbal" tells us: "The flowers of the Cowslip make a pleasant wine, approaching in flavour to the generous muscadelle wines of the south of France; it is moreover of a gentle narcotic quality and disposeth to sleep. The flowers have a roughish, bitter taste, which they impart, together with their agreeable colour, both to water and spirit. Vinous liquors impregnated with them by maceration or infusion, are mildly corroborant and anodyne. The syrup may be thus made: Take of fresh Cowslip flowers twelve ounces; of boiling water, one pint; infuse for twenty-four hours, then place on a gentle fire and boil until it is of the consistence of a syrup. One ounce in water may be taken as a dose twice in the day." Old medical writers lay great stress on a distillation of Cowslips as efficacious in nervous and brain disorders; and Parkinson says: "Its flowers yield a juice which is commended to cleanse spots or freckles, as is proved by many gentlemen of good experience." The root, when fresh drawn from the ground, has a smell like anise, and everyone has read of good Mrs. Primrose's Cowslip wine in that most delightful story, "The Vicar of Wakefield." That the flowers furnish an abundant supply of honey to the busy bee, every country child knows.

—Rich in vegetable gold.

From calyx pale the freckled Cowslip born,
 Receives in amber cups the fragrant dews of morn.

Shakespeare more than once celebrates the Cowslip. Of the Fairy Queen he says:—

The Cowslips tell her pensioners be;
 In their gold coats spots we see;
 Those be rubies, fairy favours—
 In those freckles live their labours,
 I must go seek some dewdrops here,
 And hang a pearl in every Cowslip's ear.

Then again, the dainty Ariel, sings "merrily" of his nightly lodgings in its fragrant and honeyed cop:—

Where the bee sucks there lurk I,
 In a Cowslip's bell I lie;
 There I couch when owls do cry.

Shakespeare also describes the spot of the Fairy Queen's repose:

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows
 Where Oxlip and the nodding violet grows,
 Quite overcanopied with lush woodbine,
 With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine,
 There sleeps Titania.

We may here observe that the Oxlip is merely a larger variety of the Cowslip, with flowers of the same colour, which makes a misquotation we shall presently note of graver import, inasmuch as it occurs in a work of admitted authority, of a high degree of merit, and the production of a gifted lady. In Anne Pratt's "Flowering Plants of Great Britain," vol. iv., p. 22, article "Primula (Oxlip, Cowslip)," I find the two first lines of the above quotation printed thus:—

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
 Where Oxlip and the nodding Cowslip blows.

Passing over the repetition of the word "blows" as a printer's error, I must protest against the greatest of poets being made to write such stuff as "Oxlip" and "Cowslip" in the same line, and to apply the epithet "nodding" as descriptive of this clustered bell-shaped Primrose. I have noticed this slip in no invidious spirit, but that the blemish may be removed in future editions. Shakespeare is never at fault in flowers, woodcraft or aught that relates to nature in country life. Teste, the next two quotations—the first from "Cymbeline," where he introduces a most marvellous simile drawn from minute observation:—

On her left breast,
 A mole-cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
 I the bottom of Cowslip.

Who but "nature's painter, and the best," could write this? and his next epithet, "freckled," is equally happy:—

The even mead, that erst brought sweetly forth
 The freckled Cowslip, burnet, and green clover,
 Wanting the scythe, all uncorrected rank,
 Conveys by idleness, and nothing tears
 But hateful docks, rude thistles, cockles, burrs,
 Losing both beauty and utility.

Shakespeare's next in rank, John Milton, in his exquisite masque "Comus," gives us the song of the Goddess Sabrina:—

Whilst from off the waters fleet,
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the Cowslip's velvet head
 That bends not as I tread.

We have already noticed the close family relationship of the Primrose and Cowslip. Milton refers to them thus:—

The flowery May,
 That from her green lap throws
 The yellow Cowslip and the pale Primrose.

A modern poetess, Mrs. Sigourney, draws a pretty moral from the Cowslip's treasures of fragrance and honey:—

Good Neighbour Cowslip, I have seen the bee
 Whispering to you, and have been told he says
 Quite long and late amid your golden cells
 Is it not business that he comes upon—
 Matter of fact? He never wastes an hour.
 Know you that he's a subtle fancier
 And shows some gain for every day he spends?
 Oh, learn from him the priceless worth of time,
 Thou fair and frail! So shalt thou prove the truth
 That he who makes companion of the wise
 Shall in their wisdom share.

While a voluntary exile from dear old England, the poet sends us from our Antipodean empire, after a journey in the land of roses (Persia), the following lines on finding a Cowslip between the leaves of a blotting-book:—

Nay tell me not of Austral flowers,
 Or purple bells from Persia's bowers,
 The Cowslip of this land of ours,
 Is dearer far to me.

This flower in other years I knew,
 I knew the field wherein it grew,
 With violets white and violets blue,
 Beneath the garden tree.

I never see these flowers but they
 Send back my memory far away
 To years long passed, and many a day
 Else perished long ago.

I promised in my title the poetry as well as the language and sentiment of flowers. How can I fulfil it if I omit the pretty little poem of Mary Howitt, which she calls—

COWSLIPS.

Oh, fragrant dwellers by the sea,
 When first the wild wood rings
 With each sound of vernal minstrelsy,
 When fresh the green grass springs,

What can the blessed spring restore
 More gladdening than your charms,
 Bringing the memory once more
 Of lovely fields and farms?

Of thickets, breezes, birds, and flowers;
 Of life's unfolding prime;
 Of thoughts as cloudless as the hours;
 Of souls without a crime?

Oh, blessed, blessed, do ye seem
 For even now I turned
 With soul athirst for wood and stream
 From streets that glared and burned.

From the hot town, where mortal care
 His crowded fold doth pen;
 Where stagnates the polluted air
 In many a sultry den.

And are ye here? and are ye here?
 Drinking the dew like wine,
 Midst living gales and waters clear,
 And heaven's unstinted shine.

I care not that your little life
 Will quickly have run through
 And the sword, with summer children rife,
 Keep not a trace of you.

For again, again, on dewy plain,
 I trust to see you rise,
 When spring renews the wildwood strain,
 And bluer gleam the skies.

Again, again, when merry springs
 Upon my grave shall shine,
 Here shall you speak of vanished things
 To living hearts of mine.

We may note that cows do not crop the Cowslip or Primrose, sheep and goats seldom, the horse never and that an old writer in reflecting on these habits of animals quaintly observed:—"And thus we shall see the goodness of Heaven in providing for all, seeing that if sheep did pasture on the flowers as on the herbage the honey-gathering bee and the sipping butterfly, the many insects that do live among the flowers, would fare scantily."

(To be continued.)

JAPANESE LACQUER.—It is stated that the well-known and much admired Japan lacquer-work, the secrets of which were supposed to be known only to the Easterns, has been successfully reproduced, or rather imitated, in Holland. The lacquer is prepared from Zansibar copal, coloured black with Indian ink. The articles are painted with several coats of this lacquer, in which the pieces of mother-of-pearl, or other substances used for ornamentation, are placed before it becomes hard. The lacquer is then dried by placing the articles in a heated oven or furnace, after which another coat of lacquer is applied, and when dry smoothed with pumice, which is repeated until all cracks are filled up, and the surface has become perfectly smooth, when the whole is polished, or rather burnished, with tripoli.

FACTS.

WHERE brewers should be interned?—Alesbury.
WHY is a marriage certificate like an article, the public cannot do without? Because it is a noose paper.

The boy who chopped off his leg with a shoulder-blade, subsequently tried to hang himself with the thread of a discourse.

A TRAVELLER called for mint-sauce at a hotel the other day, and the waiter said they had none, adding: "Our cook makes all the mints into pies, not sauce."

"FATHER, it tells here of illuminated MSS. What are they lighted with?"—"Lighted with? Oh, why—my—son, they are lighted with—with the light of other days!"

"WHY," says sentimental Jones, with a tear in his eye, "does the sight of China always remind me of a battle-field after the battle is over?"—Because I think of the poor slain (porcelain).

"I'm on the sea. I'm on the sea," roared a bad singer.—"You're not," cried a musical punster in company, "you would be on the C if you sung in tune; but you are on the B flat, confound you!"
"My dear," said a husband, in startled tones, after waking his wife in the middle of the night, "I have swallowed a dose of strychnine!" "Well, then, do for goodness sake lie still, or it may come up!"

A FAST BOY.

"I say, my lad, what's your name?"
"Robert, sir."
"But what's your other name?"
"Bob."

A LITTLE girl, reading the history of England with her mother, and coming to the statement that Henry I. never laughed after the death of his son, looked up and asked: "What did he do when he was tickled?"

A HOT SEA.—"Mamma," said an inquisitive little lady of some six summers, "what makes the sea so hot in a storm?" "Hot, my dear?" mamma answered; "what makes you think it is hot?"
"Why, mamma, I have just been readin' about the boiling waves."

DANGER.

SMALL HORSEMAN (to gigantic individual): "Now then, you old fool, why don't you get out of the road? It would serve you right if I was to run over you!"—Judy.

SOMETHING WRONG.

LITTLE GIRL: "Johnny, the doctor says you're going to have the measles, and he says they've been over so long in the cinema!" (She must have meant system, but it doesn't signify).—Judy.

SEWING.

OLD CLOTHESMAN: "Any ole clo' to sell, shir?"

GENT (indignantly): "Hang you! No!"
OLD CLOTHESMAN: "Very shorry, shir—meant no offence, shir. Didn't know that wash the only shuit you'd got, shir!"

A HUNGRY CLAIMANT.

LEGAL ADVISER: "But what were the provisions of the will?"

MR. FLANNIGAN: "Provisions" is it? Devil a bit of provisions was there at all! An' that's why we're all starvin'!"—Punch.

We sat next a young lady in church, the other day, who wore a huge chignon, splendid curls, etc. As we were wondering (for the thoughts of the best of us will wander) whether it was all real, the lady began to join in the singing. We were sure then that, at all events, her ear was false.

DEFINITIONS.

Corrupt Practices—Quick doctors!
Scotland-yard Measure—Three policemen's feet.
New Parlour Game—Cricket on the hearth.
Disease of the Chest—Rusty locks.
Best thing to do when you go shopping with ladies—Takenotes.—Judy.

Yew—Tibbs was making a tip for his fly-rod, and Tibbs stood watching him. There was very early a row over it, peaceful as the occupation was.

Tibbs said, "Give me a good second-growth ash; it's just as good as lancewood." "What's the matter with you?" Tibbs demanded. "What's the matter with me? Nothing's the matter. What makes you think so?" "No, no; yew wood." "I would what?" "Confound it, can't you understand a man? I mean yew wood—the wood of the yew tree, saved into shape. Now then, is that plain enough?" "Oh!" said Tibbs, much relieved, "I never yewed any."

INDEPENDENCE.

ELDER SISTER (condescendingly): "See, Ethel, you had better come and walk in my shadow. It will be cooler for you."

YOUNGER SISTER (who resents patronage): "You are very good, Maud; but I have a shadow of my own, thank you!"—Punch.

SCIENTIFIC.

"What are the properties of heat?"
"Heat expands and cold contracts, and that's what makes the days longer in summer and shorter in winter."

"There, that will do; you may go out and play, and don't study any more to-day."

PROMISING.

"Sunny, do you know Mr. Jones?"
"Yes, sir; and a mighty nice man he is too. Thinks the world and all of folks if they only keep away from him. He's fond of the world, but don't like company. If you don't like to be bit by a yaller dog you had better go somewhere else."

COMFORTING.

IRATE DAUGHTER: "Look, Ma—I am so offended—some impudent person has sent me this valentine—and it says I am a convulsed creature—is it not shameful?"

SYMPATHIZING PARENTE: "Then, my dear, you may be sure it has been sent by some one who knows you."

VERY COMMON CONVERSATION.

TOM (who will have his joke): "I see you fellows have got the sack between you. How'd you like it, Jack?"

JACK: "Well the gu'nor's often promised to give it us, but I never thought he'd put so much in it. I used to think it'd break my art; now I'm only afeared for my back!"—Punch.

SO YOUNG, TOO.

FITZBROWN: "I suppose you found Wales and the lake scenery very charming?"

AMERICAN YOUNG LADY: "Oh! pretty fair, you know, but very small after our magnificent mountains and gigantic waterfalls; er—and our country is so much younger than yours, too—hardly a century old yet, Mr. Fitzbrown?"—Punch.

TRIFLES LIGHT AS AIR.

BRIDGET: "You needn't look at me so hard, Pat; I'm no relation of yours."

PAT: "But my horse has a relation in your house."

BRIDGET: "Arrah, what relation is that?"

PAT: "The clothes horse, avourneens. (Rides slowly away.)

THE American post-laureate Smith had a query put to him which he thought might be useful to the world for him to try and solve; it was this—"Why is an egg underdone like an egg overdone?" He was at last compelled to refer it to Congress. After sitting upon it several days they called in Mark Twain who said: "You see, it is because they are both hardy done, which I hope is not the case with Smith, for it is to be trusted he is quite done." Rival poets will be severe.

A PARIS beggar, who the other day being rebuked by an official for keeping a dog while he himself was fain to seek relief at the Bureau de Bienfaisance, replied, indignantly: "What would you have me do? When I divide my crust with that creature he looks at me so that my bread seems less dry. You give me bread, my dog gives me cheese. God bless him and you, Monsieur le Maire"—a remark which caused the dog to wag his tail violently in token of approval as the beggar marched off.

JUST SO—OR EVEN MORE SO?

YOUNG LADY (gauging the negro mind): "Well, now, Dinah, tell me, supposing you had to meet with an accident, whether would you prefer being in a train during a collision, or on a steamboat which was wrecked?"

DINAH: "Oh, missie, dis nigger much prefer, de sinking boat!"

YOUNG LADY: "Why so?"

DINAH: "Well, you see, Missie, if you be in train and smash come, where is you? Now, if you be in steam ship and she go down—why, dere you are!"—Judy.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE thinks that as regard physical power the British soldier is ready to go anywhere at five minutes' notice. A person ambitious of serving in Her Majesty's army wishes to know, if a man has torticollis, enchylosis of the radius,

paralyzation of the aileron, and quaternum ventriculum obliteration of the lower labii superioris, aliquid, and, besides, does not feel so himself, whether he is likely to be refused by a recruiting sergeant? Perhaps one of the Service journals will answer the question. Judy.

A REAL GENTLEMAN DEFINED.

The test of a "real gentleman" is a curiosity of these modern times. A restaurant waiter was brought into one of our courts for examination, and the following testimony was giving: "What is your name?" "Robert Plunky, sir." "Well, Mr. Plunky, you say the defendant is no gentleman. What makes you think so?" "Cause, sir, he always says thank you when I hand him a nation-chop or even a bit of bread. Now a real gentleman never does this, but hollers out, 'Here, Jobo, give me a nation-chop.' You can't deceive me with a gentleman, your worship, cause why I've associated with too many of 'em."

GENTLEMANLY JUSTICE.

"Is your name Cornfield?" inquired a judge as the next prisoner walked out.

"Yes, sir," was the prompt response.

"I didn't know but what it was wheatfield or cornfield, or some other field. It's all right, Mr. Cornfield. We'll have a threshing here in less than a minute. Were you drunk last night?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you've been here before?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you haven't resolved never to come again?"

"No, sir."

"That's business, and it does me good to hear a man speak up that way. Mr. Cornfield, how would fourteen days suit?"

"I am satisfied."

"Then fourteen days it is, and I'll ask the driver to give you the best seat in the van and let you read his comic paper as you drive up. Good-bye, Mr. Cornfield."

A HIGHLAND LAD.—In the Heelands they have a very smart race growing, if this report on sporting is quite correct. The persons talking sports are an elderly "Heeland" lady and a boy of twelve, fond of fishing and shooting. The "Heeland" lady, thinking the boy has a propensity for the sea, endeavours to check it by suddenly exclaiming, laying down her paper and heaving a deep sigh: "Ah, Andrew, lad, how terrible it must be to be shipwrecked long at sea, you know, when they are drawing lots to eat some one!" "I'd jump into the sea before they should draw lots for me," exclaimed the youth to the lady. "But, Andrew, my lad, they would fish you up." Sportive Andrew was not to be had like that, for he replied at once: "I wouldn't bite."

"You're a verra clever callant, but noo if you were on land and met a leopard?" "Ah, you wouldn't leave me, would you?" asked the boy. "Noo, noo, liddle, I wouldn't leave ya if I were there, I'd stand before you." "Oh, what a good soul you are a dear! that would be nice!" exclaimed the delighted, innocent boy. "For then, you know, I could run off while it ate you up!"

DUCK SHOOTING.

"Speaking of shooting ducks," says Dr. F., "puts me in mind of the great storm that occurred when I lived on the island. As you are well aware, our island was near by Cazen Bay; an awful storm arose, and was so fierce that it drove all the ducks in the bay into a pond, covering about an acre near my house. In fact, so many ducks crowded into that pond that I could not see a drop of water."

"Well," says Smith, "did ye shute any of 'em?"
"That's what I was coming at. I went into the house and got my double-barrelled gun and discharged both barrels in the midst of them, but, to my astonishment, they arose in the air, leaving not a solitary duck in the pond."

"Good gracious! ye don't say," says Smith; "didn't ye hev any shot in yer gun, or what was the trouble?"

"Well, I was coming to that," said Dr. F. "It astonished me at first, but as soon as the ducks rose a few hundred yards in the air and began to separate a little, the ducks began to drop, and whether you believe it or not, I picked up twenty-nine barrels of ducks, and it was a poor season for ducks too. You see, the ducks were wedged in so solid in the pond that when they rose they carried the dead ones into the air with them, and when they separated down came the twenty-nine barrels of dead ones."

A COOKING RECIPE.

How neatly a Frenchman turns a compliment, or gives a recipe for cooking! Here is a new method of preparing wild duck, told with exceeding grace:

"Once upon a time there was a terrible wild man who lived on nothing but what he shot or fished. I came across him in his forest; I was hungry. With the hospitality of an aborigine, the wild man invited

me to dine with him on a magnificent wild duck, which he proposed roasting. It was a lovely sight to see how the noble bird, turning slowly before the fire, was just assuming a delicate golden tint.

"Looks nicely! does it not?" said the man. "But I shall not roast it!"

"In vain did I plead for roast duck. Remorselessly he tore the bird from the spit; cut off legs, and wings, divided up the breast and pitched all pell-mell into the stewpot.

"Sad, even despairing, and hungry to my very toes, I had a remonstrance on my lips as I saw the wild creature throw into the pot a pinch of salt, then a few peppercorns, two tablespoonfuls of olive oil, then a half-tumbler of Bordeaux wine, and last the juice of a lemon, and I turned away in despair."

"Then the untamed man stirred it, and let it simmer for half an hour. Somewhat doubtful I tasted the dish. Oh, ecstasy! it was delicious! Full of enthusiasm, I, the hungry man, give the world this recipe; go shoot the duck and cook him thus."

A BRILLIANT RECEPTION.

The visit of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar appears to have stimulated the hospitality of our official authorities in a remarkable degree. It being thought important to impress the distinguished visitor with the wealth, power, and greatness of this country, steps have been taken to effect this object in the most striking and effectual manner.

On his arrival at Gravesend, after being presented with a pint of fresh shrimps, the sultan was escorted into a steam-tug with an awning (liberally supplied by the Citizen Company), and was rapidly conveyed up the river through the Pool, in drizzling weather, to Westminster. His highness expressed great admiration at the manner in which the blacks from the chimney of the steamer gathered about his royal person, as if recognizing an African potentate. "A guard of honour marked their sense of the occasion by arriving late at the Westminster landing-stage. In attendance their arrival, the Sultan's tug was moored to a coal-barge, whose fine lines and generally brilliant appearance appeared to interest him much. After some time an imposing force, consisting of a whole sergeant's guard, marched up, with a brass band; and the distinguished visitor and his suite, amid the clasp of a small but enthusiastic crowd on Westminster Bridge, were deposited, bag and baggage, on the landing-stage, where a gentleman in a blue livery informed them that they might go to their hotel, and amuse themselves as they pleased.

"Growlers" having been procured, a procession was formed, which drove rapidly away in the direction of Hyde Park. The band then played "God Save the Queen," in recognition of our national hospitality, and the crowd dispersed—Punch.

MUSICAL ACCENT.

Tom Cook was subpoenaed as a witness. On cross-examination by Sir James Scarlett, he was asked:

"What is a musical accent?"

"My terms are a guinea a lesson, said," said Cook.

A loud laugh.

Sir James, who was rather ruffled said, "Never mind your terms here—I ask you what is a musical accent? Can you see it?"

"No."

"Can you feel it?"

"A musician can."

Great laughter.

Now pray, sir, said Sir James, very angry, don't beat about the bush, but explain to his lordship and the jury who are supposed to know nothing about music, the meaning of what you call "accent."

"Accent in music is a certain stress laid upon a particular note, in the same manner as you would lay a stress upon any given word for the purpose of being better understood. Thus if I were to say, 'You are a donkey,' it rests on donkey; but if I were to say 'You are a donkey,' it rests on you, Sir James."

Reiterated shouts of laughter by the whole court, in which the bench itself joined, followed this repartee. Silence being at length restored, the Judge, with much seeming gravity, accented the chaplain counsel thus—

"Are you satisfied, Sir James?"

Sir James, in a great huff, said—

"The witness may go down."

We fear that the peculiar humour of the London cabman is in danger of extinction. A cabbie, who, when paid his proper fare, asked his customer how long he had been from the country, and, alluding to his husband, said he saw he had lost his pa, has been

fined ten shillings for abuse. Really, if cabbie cannot have his little joke now, his life will become intolerable, and what will the comic writers do if his agreeable pleasantness is suppressed in this fashion?

It is said that Miss Thompson has already got her next picture on the stocks, and has been offered several thousands of pounds for it by Lord Dudley. The subject is not finally fixed upon, or rather the exact situation and characters, but it is understood that the work will relate to the Indian mutiny.

St. James mentions a widow that married her twenty-third husband, whom in his turn had been married to twenty wives—surely an experienced couple! A woman named Elizabeth Massé, who died at Florence in 1768, had been married to seven husbands, all of whom she outlived. She espoused the last at the mature age of 70. When on her deathbed she recalled the good and bad points in each of her husbands, and having impartially weighed them in the balance, she singled out her fifth spouse as her favourite, and desired that her remains might be interred near his.

THE TWO SHIPS.

Two goodly ships in gallant trim

Sailed slowly from the harbour's mouth;

One northward veered through shadowa dim,

And one for summer seas to south.

While tearful eyes and quivering lip

Marked the dark passage of the one,

Hope, trust and joyance filled the ship

That gaily sailed to seas of sun.

My lot was cast where Arctic blast

Swept the north-bearing craft afar;

My love to tropic seasons passed;

Where lofty shines the southern star.

Sad were our farewells, wildly clung

Our last embrace, ere far apart

Our destinies divergent swung;

Yet still was whispered to my heart,

"Tis but the chance of circumstance

That parts ye now, as it should be;

Have faith in Him who guides where glance

The summer and the winter sea."

And, lo! when near the haven drew,

It proved the same, both ships had sought

By different tracks across the blue,

Yet guided by the self-same thought.

By silvery coasts and fairy isles,

Through violet deeps her course had run,

Still pointing toward the Port of Smiles,

Which mine by stormy ways had won.

Down dropped the anchor, dropped the sail,

We met upon the gleaming beach,

And once more breathed the old sweet tale

In silence sweeter far than speech.

Our haven gained, we have no need

To tell the toils and hardships o'er,

That swept us on with tempest speed

To join at last upon the shore.

We even blessed the separate ways

That, while they seemed to lead apart,

Still tended through the dubious ways

To draw us nearer, heart to heart.

N. D. N.

STATISTICS.

IRELAND.—The Report of the Commissioners of National Education for 1874 is now issued. It states that on the 31st of December last there were 7,257 schools in operation, being 97 more than in 1873. The number of children on the rolls who made any attendance was 1,006,511, which was an increase of 81,815 over the previous year. The average daily attendance was 395,390, which was 31,815 more than in 1873. The Commissioners explain the irregularity of the attendances by the habit, and in most cases the necessity, of employing the children during certain seasons in farm work. They have endeavoured to make other schools attractive, and the system of payment by results has acted as a stimulus, and there has been a decided improvement in the attendance. There were 85 schools struck off the rolls, chiefly for inefficient attendance, and five schools suspended. The number of warranted schools is 5,356. There are 1,252 clerical and 204 lay Roman Catholic managers, 261 clerical and 808 lay Protestant Episcopal managers, 328 clerical and 173 lay Presbyterian managers, 68 clerical and 42 lay managers of other denominations, and 207 official lay managers. There are 4,741 schools under Roman Catholic clerical management. Over 70 per cent. of the pupils in attendance are Roman Catholic, 11 per cent. Presbyterian, and over 8 per cent. Protestant Episcopal. The average daily attendance in the model schools was 8,619; in 1873 it was 8,654. The

number on the rolls is larger. During the year 528 teachers, of whom 156 were trained in Dublin at the public expense, were withdrawn from the service.

GEMS.

PLEASURES come like oren, and go away like post-horses.

Too many persons are less ashamed of having done wrong than of being found out.

As length of life is denied us, we should at least do something to show that we have lived.

One of the saddest things about human nature is, that a man may guide others in the path of life without walking in it himself—that he may be a pilot, and yet a castaway.

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after your own; but the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd, keeps, with perfect sweetness, the independence of solitude.

He who riches have secured influence in the social world, and be surrounded by all the luxuries and splendour that wealth can bestow; yet what amounts the occupancy of a gilded palace, if the art of contentment does not exist in the bosom of the possessor of it.

To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and, though it must be allowed that he suffers it out like a hero, that hides his grief in silence, yet it cannot be denied that he who complains not like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-creatures.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

QUICK PUDDING.—One egg, one cup of sugar, one tablespoonful of melted butter, one cup of sweet milk, half a teaspoonful of soda, three cups of flour. Bake half an hour or more. Eat with sweet sauce.

APPLE PUDDING.—One pint sweet milk, four eggs beaten to a froth, one teaspoonful of soda, a little salt, flour enough to make a batter, four large apples chopped, stir well; bake in deep tins; serve hot, with butter and sugar.

FANCY CAKES.—Beat the yolks of four eggs into half a pound of white sugar, add a little less than half a pound of flour. Beat fifteen minutes, flavour with lemon, add the whites of the eggs well beaten. Bake in small patties and put sugar plums on top.

VINEGAR CANDY.—One cup white sugar, one half cup vinegar; boil till it craps in cold water. This makes an excellent candy, and somewhat beneficial also as it is good for colds. If the vinegar be very strong take a little less of it and some water, but for us the strength of the vinegar never hurts. When done pour out on buttered plates, and either mark off in squares an inch or two wide as it cools, or else, when cool enough to handle, draw it until it is nice and white; then cut it into sticks.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is statistically computed that 100,000,000 nuts of various kinds are annually eaten in America.

The Tuilmore guardians have granted out-door relief (which is in Ireland given only in exceptional cases) to an aged woman on her producing a certificate showing her to have been born in the year 1772.

Good news having been received from all the wine-growing districts, there is but one cry of joy and admiration in the vineyards at the magnificent appearance of the vines. Since 1840 such promises of abundance have not been seen.

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.—Hermann, the perfume manufacturer of Cannes, uses annually one hundred and forty thousand pounds of rose leaves, thirty-two thousand pounds of jasmine flowers, twenty thousand pounds of violets, eight thousand pounds of tuberose, and other perfume-laden flowers in like proportions.

The directors of the Alexandra Palace really deserve the thanks of the public for making Saturday a popular, that is to say, a shilling day, with the exception of one Saturday a month, and for providing extra attractions on our weekly half-holiday. The directors are highly satisfied with the success of this new pleasure resort thus far.

MR. HERLEY CAMPO TESTO has just returned from Rome, where he has been engaged for many months past on a portrait of Pius IX. The work is now completed. The figure is "seated" and of life-size. Cardinal Manning has pronounced it the best portrait of his Holiness he has ever seen. The Pope has testified his own approval by bestowing upon the painter the Order of St. Sylvester.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
THE MAIDEN OF THE LAKE ... 241	STATISTICS ... 263
ONLY A CUR ... 244	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES ... 263
"HE WOULD BE A GENTLEMAN" ... 244	MISCELLANEOUS ... 263
THE SECRET OF POWER ... 245	WINIFRED WYNNE; OR, THE GOLD-SMITH'S DAUGHTER, commenced in ... 615
HUNTED FOR HER MONEY ... 248	HUNTED FOR HER MONEY, commenced in ... 615
WINIFRED WYNNE; OR, THE GOLD-SMITH'S DAUGHTER ... 249	THE SPIDER AND THE FLY, commenced in ... 630
THE SPIDER AND THE FLY ... 253	THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, commenced in ... 635
LOVE'S PERILS ... 255	LOVE'S PERILS, commenced in ... 635
TOO AMABLE BY HALF ... 257	THE SECRET OF POWER, commenced in ... 639
THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS—No. 11 ... 260	
FACTS ... 262	
THE TWO SHIPS ... 263	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

HENRY C.—The report has been received, but the subject is scarcely suitable for the *LONDON READER*.

MILLIKEN.—A letter addressed to the Home Office, bearing the gentleman's official designation, would no doubt find him.

G. L. M.—The poverty of your announcement is not such as will meet with general approbation. The terms employed are too extravagant and contradictory to be consistent with any notions of humour.

E. M.—Your letter is calculated to puzzle, for while you give a country address you distinctly state that you live in London. Anomalies of this description often stand in the way of the realization of a person's hopes.

STURTEVANT.—As a judgment on the subject cannot be formed without the opportunity of inspection, your better course seems to be to consult one of the surgeons who practice in the town in which you reside.

AMELIA W.—The handwriting is very plain and neat. It is sufficiently good to qualify you as an assistant to a shopkeeper so far as handwriting is concerned, but you know that good handwriting is not the only qualification required for such a situation.

H. J. W.—The rhymes about "The Months of the Year" and "My Love" are too simple for publication. The last verse of the latter piece has the misfortune to remind the reader of the aphorism that "between the sublime and the ridiculous there is but a step."

SUBSCRIBER.—The publication in question can be procured by order of any bookseller or news-vendor. With regard to the other topic of your note there is an old adage and a very true one that declares that Love will find out the way, which is indeed obvious enough to any person who considers the subject.

R. S.—The "Sailor's Song" and "The Red, White and Blue of Our British Flag" are very good songs in their way. If the former were set to somewhat plaintive music and the latter were endowed with a stirring, martial tune, both would, if well sung, doubtless elicit the applause of a sympathizing audience.

FORNEMOTER.—Tonics and medicines which have a tendency to increase the appetite and to strengthen and brace the body generally. The pimpler would pass away by attention to your diet and exercise. Sunken eyes are frequently the result of privations, fatigue and care. Persons who persevere freely without exertion, in the manner you describe, should consult a physician without delay.

A TOTAL ABSTAINER.—Your best course of action is to do your duty in your present position and to strive to be content. Your desire should be to make yourself fit to profit by any advantageous opportunity that should in the natural order of things come in your way, rather than to allow any small annoyance to tempt you to force a change which might only lead you out of the frying-pan into the fire.

A CONSTANT READER.—"Can the father of an illegitimate child be legally enforced to contribute to its support after the expiration of twelve months from its birth, the child not having been sworn to him?"—Answer: No, unless the alleged father has within the last twelve months paid money for the child's maintenance, in which case he may be proceeded against at any subsequent period, without limitation as to time.

CLARENCE.—The best thing to remove hair from the face is a keen, polished razor, purchased at good cutler's shop. You will require a brush and soap as auxiliaries to the razor, and since we are unable to accommodate you with a diagram to show the precise manner in which these instruments are manipulated, we suggest that for one occasion only you should ask of some kindly disposed barber permission to gaze upon the occupants of the barber's chair.

GREEN PIE OWEN.—Portland is a peninsula in the county of Dorset, in the south of England. It contains the castle of Portland, built by Henry VIII. in 1540, the Bow and Arrow Castle, erected by William Rufus, a convict prison, built in 1842, and a few small villages. The population is small, between 6,000 and 7,000. The place contains extensive quarries of stone, which afford employment to the labouring men. Many men are also engaged in constructing a harbour of refuge, which is expected to shelter an area of water of upwards of two thousand acres in extent.

MRS. MCC.—The discharges and testimonials to servants are usually given *viva voce*; but if writing is required to be used, the words employed are put in the form of a note written in the third person. Thus a discharge would be given in some such terms as the following: "Mrs. So-and-So begs to inform Janet Blank that her services will not be required after a date." While a testimonial would say: "This is to certify that Elizabeth White was in the service of Mrs. Major Macpherson

as cook for the period of three years, and that Mrs. Major Macpherson cannot speak in too favourable terms of her late cook's professional abilities, general intelligence, steadiness and cleanliness."

BLAIR.—There seems to be some misapprehension in your note. Madder, which is the root of a tree, when treated with certain chemicals yields a red colouring substance. Madder is not a component of ordinary black dyes, although stated so to be in some popular books. Calico printers, indeed, whose process differs considerably from dyers, produce a black upon cotton by means of an iron mordant with madder, after which the cotton is passed through a hot solution of logwood. This is the process your head seems to be running upon, but in this process there is no boiling, as you seem to suppose, neither are madder and logwood the only materials used, nor are they mixed together, although they come subsequently in contact, and above all, it is in the process of calico printing and not of calico dyeing that madder is used in connection with black figures. In the accounts of simply dyeing cotton and linen stuffs black we read nothing about the use of madder. These fabrics, when dyed black first to be dyed blue, that is, treated with indigo, then they have to be immersed in a gall liquor, then in an iron liquor, the preparation of which alone, in France especially, is an elaborate affair; after this follows a treatment of alder bark, sumach, and other things, the fabrics being dipped and boiled again and again. But no madder is used in these black dyes. This is our point, which we thus prominently refer to, because we aware that an author of some authority has given a receipt (erroneously, we think) in which madder is stated to be a component part of a black dye. To learn the art of dyeing takes time. You cannot arrive at it without some trouble and expense. It is the desire to call your attention to the latter item that leads us to write these truisms and to add: Manipulate such small items as your ribbons and neckties after the fashion of a dyer if you will, and use Judson's dyes.

AFTER THE PARTY.

Fair women drop out from your threshold
Like blossoms flung out in the morn,
Warm, fragrant and waxen, but drooping
They meet the gray, shadowy dawn.
Floating out to each carriage in waiting,
Where, chrysalis-like, each had flown,
Each fair, weary head, with its chaplet,
Counts its gains and its losses alone.

Has the queen of the party some sorrow
That down from the lids drooping low
Fall hot tears on the roses she presses—
Is there fire lying under the snow?
When the jewel fell from her crown but a sceptre
Commanding her blind devotee,
And the haughty red mouth was unsmiling,
Was it only a strange soporific?

When she passed Hilton Ryle, did she see him
Low bending by Adian fair?
Did she see in his hand the blue blossom
That earlier drooped in her hair?
She smiled and smiled, I remember,
Nor seemed to see aught by the way;
But a woman sees swiftly a rival,
Though gestures nor movement betray.

Ah, queen, you have tried him too hardly,
The vassal has tugged at his chain
Until coldness its links have corroded,
And now he is free once again.
Ah, yes, tell the rose your repentance
Of lofty, unwomanly pride,
And whisper at will the sad secret,
The self lingers not at your side.

For the heart you have lost growth priceless,
The captive set free dearer grows;
Would the cold, bitter words were unspeakable!
Would the part could return, little rose!
You are cool to my cheeks, little blossoms;
The words I have whispered don't tell;
But the party is over, sweet roses,
And I—ah, I loved him so well! E. L.

JOSEPHINE.—The height of the spire of Salisbury Cathedral is four hundred and four feet. It is, we believe, the loftiest in England. In architectural glossaries the word spire is defined to mean "the tapering mass which forms the summit of a steeple." It seems therefore to follow that when we have given you the height of the highest spire in England we have also given you the height of the highest steeple. The height of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, as distinguished from the tower and cross by which it is surmounted, is about two hundred and seventy-eight feet. We know of no dome in England of greater height than this. Perhaps the best mode of obtaining knowledge on the subject referred to at the end of your note is to try your fortunes as others do. The way to try is obvious, and experience, so they say, is a good schoolmaster.

JEALOUS CATTLE DEALER'S DAUGHTER.—It is not surprising that your unwelcome admirer should be unimpressed by your wordy declarations about the intolerable boredom of his frequent visits. His passion for you drove him into a deep study of the poems of Shakespeare, and coming over "The Passionate Pilgrim," he read the lines:

"Have you not heard it said full oft
A woman's nay doth stand for nought?"

So he will not heed your words. Therefore your tactics must be changed. Try what looks will do. You wish his visits to you to cease. Then look as if you meant it. Your instinct should tell you how, by means of a very few words and by the potency of your expression and demeanour you can smile upon him until he blooms no more, in your presence at all events. The same recipe is applicable to your friend who teases you with too many kisses. When they become unpleasant to you your eyes can say so better than your tongue.

J. B. twenty-three, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen or twenty with a view to matrimony; she must be a Roman Catholic.

W. J. C. twenty-eight, medium height, rather dark, in

business as draper, wishes to correspond with a young lady, fair and accomplished, with a view to matrimony.

VICTOR, nineteen, tall, dark brown eyes, black hair, musical, would like to correspond with a young gentleman who would be fond of home and wife; a tradesman preferred.

JAMES, twenty-three, tall, fair, with blue eyes, wishes to correspond with an amiable young lady about twenty-two, who is fond of home and music; a dark one preferred. He has 150*l.* in Bank of England.

ANDREW, twenty-two, 5*ft.* 5*in.*, considered good looking by his friends, wishes to correspond with young lady about twenty-one; he is an engineer with a good salary, and would make a good husband to a loving wife.

M. A. C. would like to marry a steady young man who is loving and fond of home; she is twenty-eight, medium height, dark, domesticated, fond of home, has no encumbrance, has dark wavy hair and dark eyes.

G. H. twenty-nine, medium height, of fair complexion, a clerk, wishes to correspond with a young lady or widow about about his own age, of fair complexion and religious, with a view to matrimony; she must have money.

VIOLET, nineteen, rather short but nice looking, dark hair, light blue eyes, wishes to correspond with a nice dark young man with a view to marriage; she is a native of London, but in Manchester at the present time on business.

GEORGE, thirty-five, fair, a Scotsman, wishes to correspond with a young lady with a view to marriage within a twelvemonth; he is in business, has 600*l.* capital, and an income from 180*l.* to 150*l.* He would like to meet with a good looking girl with some means.

MORRIS RHO, twenty-six, respectable and good looking, a mechanic worth nearly 600*l.*, wishes to correspond with a young lady with a view to marriage; she should be thoroughly domesticated and good looking, worth the same amount or more. A young widow not objected to, with money.

T. H. a young man in the Metropolitan Police, being tired of a single life, desires to meet with an intelligent young woman with a view to matrimony; he is twenty-eight, fair, considered good looking, and can play well on the violin and pianoforte. Respondent should be intelligent and well-disposed.

HARRY JACK, twenty-one, a tall, handsome young man, ditto, fond of singing and music, earns a salary of 180*l.* per annum, has 200*l.* in Bank of England, and is of good education, wishes to correspond with a handsome young lady about twenty; an actress preferred. "Happy Jack" would make a good husband to a loving wife.

THREE COMPANIONS.—"Lonely Alice," twenty, dark hair and eyes, tall, very loving, would like to correspond with a tall young man, a captain or sergeant in the army. "Violet," twenty-five, medium height, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a captain or mate in a merchant ship. "Annie," twenty, medium height, fair, very loving, would like to correspond with a captain or mate in a merchant ship. Respondents who are companions would be preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

POLLY is responded to by—"William," who thinks he would make a loving husband.

ALBERT by—"Annie," twenty-one, dark, of a loving disposition and fond of home, thinks she is all he requires in a wife.

DARK EYES by—"T. H.," who would make her a good husband; and by—"Giuseppe," 5*ft.* 5*in.*, fair, blue eyes, good tempered, and holds a good position in the Royal Navy.

ANDREW JACK AND PEARL THE DRIVER by—"Agnes" and "Maude," "Amiable Jack" by "Agnes," nineteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, good looking, and thinks she can do all that he requires. "Fred the Driver" by Maude, nineteen, 5*ft.* 7*in.*, fair, blue eyes, and would make a loving wife.

LIL by—"J. B.," twenty-seven, 5*ft.* 9*in.*, dark complexion, blue eyes, and in a good position; by—"Amiable Fred," twenty-five, 5*ft.* 9*in.*, good looking, loving, of good connections and accomplished; he has 150*l.* in cash besides property; and by—"A. B. C.," twenty-seven, 5*ft.* 8*in.*, good looking, has a little money, fond of home, and would make a loving husband.

ARTHUR T. by—"Emily," twenty, tall, rather dark, very domesticated, loving, and thinks she is all he requires; by—"S. M. B.," twenty-one, tall, dark hair and eyes, tolerably good looking, thinks she could be very fond of a sailor, and would make a loving wife; by—"Annie T.," twenty-one, tall, fair, considered good looking, and would make a good, loving wife; and by—"Zillah B.," dark hair, passable in looks, good tempered, loving, very respectable, would like to be a sailor's bride.

ALL THE BACK NUMBERS, PARTS AND VOLUMES of the "LONDON READER" are in print and may be had at the Office, 334, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom Post-free for Three-halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

THE LONDON READER, Post-free, Three-halfpence Weekly; or Quarterly One Shilling and Eightpence. **LIFE AND FASHION,** Vols. 1 and 2, Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence each.

Now Ready Vol. XXIV. of THE LONDON READER, Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

Also, the TITLE and INDEX to Vol. XXIV., Price One Penny.

NOTICE.—Part 143, for JUNE, Now Ready, Price Sixpence, post-free Eightpence.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

††† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand by G. A. SATTIN.

